



sunday pioneer

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Wave in favour of 'Mahayuti' alliance: Modi



Trump's presidency may BENEFIT India: Moody's

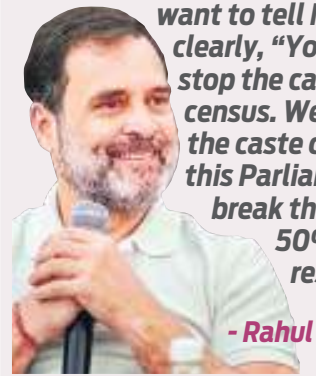


Building on LEGACY with ambition



QUOTE OF THE DAY The pioneer

Modi ji, caste census started in Telangana today. We will use the data obtained from this to frame policies for the state's development. Soon this will happen in Maharashtra also. I want to tell Modiji clearly, "You cannot stop the caste census. We will pass the caste census in this Parliament and break the wall of 50% on reservation"



- Rahul Gandhi, LoP P4

DON'T MISS...

Minister reviews law & order issues with DGP

Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha has conducted a comprehensive review on the law and order situation across the State. The virtual meeting included the Director General of Police, Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, Additional Director General (Intelligence), all District Superintendents of Police, Commissioners of Police, and other senior officials. The discussion centered on critical areas such as crimes against women, social media abuses, the illegal ganja trade, and enhancing law enforcement...

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Varra's life under threat: Rachamalla

YSRCP spokesperson Rachamalla Sivaprasada Reddy has demanded that social media activist Varra Ravindra Reddy be produced before court as his life could be under threat going by the sequence of events. Speaking to media here on Saturday he said, the way the 'TDP-friendly media' were flashing headline after headline and following it up on one hand and officials from DGP, DIG, SP reacting to the news of his arrest and disappearance creates an impression that Ravindra Reddy's life is under threat. He is just a small-time...

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'No right to stay in power'

NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Saturday attacked Maharashtra's BJP-led Mahayuti, saying a coalition that has no grasp of agriculture and lacks concerns for the educated unemployed has no right to remain in power. Farmers in the state are being neglected, while key projects are being diverted to Gujarat, he said at a campaign rally for the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in Udgir in Latur district. Pawar's party has fielded Sudhakar Bhalero against Sanjay Bansode of rival NCP, headed by his...

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AI Express plans more international flights

Expanding its network and tapping group synergies, Air India Express will focus on connecting smaller cities and towns with metros as well as fly to new overseas destinations, according to senior officials. The airline, which recently completed the merger of AIX Connect with itself, has a fleet of around 90 aircraft and the count is expected to cross 110 by the end of this fiscal. It also aims to fly to a total of 55 destinations by the end of March 2025 and has also rationalised its network as part of Air India Group strategy. Apart from adding domestic routes, the Tata Group-owned airline will start flights to more foreign destinations, including Bangkok and Phuket in Thailand, the officials said. Air India Express...

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'A milestone in AP's growth'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a significant move to revolutionise the tourism sector, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday inaugurated a seaplane demonstration at Punnami Ghat, Prakasam Barrage, in Vijayawada.

Minister for Civil Aviation K Ram Mohan Naidu, Ministers BC Janardhan Reddy, Kandula Durgesh, MP Kesineni Sivanath, Secretary GoAP S Suresh Kumar, Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, and other dignitaries were present.

The occasion marks the beginning of India's first-ever seaplane service for tourists, set to offer a new and innovative way to explore the State's scenic beauty and religious landmarks.

Accompanied by Minister for Civil Aviation K Ram Mohan Naidu, the Chief Minister took a maiden flight on the seaplane from the Prakasam Barrage to Srisailem. The event, organised by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, also featured a live demonstration of the seaplane's capabilities at Patalganga in Srisailem.

Earlier, addressing the gathering at Punnami Ghat, the CM described the launch as a milestone in Andhra Pradesh's tourism growth. "For the first time in India, tourists will be able to travel by seaplane, and Andhra Pradesh is proud to lead this innovation," he said. Continued on Page 2

CM NAIDU SETS IN MOTION 'SEAPLANE'



- For the first time in India, tourists will be able to travel by seaplane, and Andhra Pradesh is proud to lead this innovation.
- Seaplane travel is an innovative opportunity that will play a crucial role in the State's development.
- In the coming years, seaplanes could be as common as airplanes in providing transportation to tourists.

SpiceJet set to launch seaplane operations in 2025



VIJAYAWADA: SpiceJet has announced plans to launch seaplane operations in 2025, connecting some of India's most remote and picturesque locations. The announcement was made on Saturday by SpiceJet's Chairman and Managing Director, Ajay Singh, on the occasion of a demonstration seaplane flight from Prakasam

Barrage in Vijayawada to Srisailem Dam. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Minister for Civil Aviation K Ram Mohan Naidu were present on the occasion. SpiceJet has partnered in seaplane trials across multiple locations, providing crucial engineering, technical, and logistical support to De Havilland. Continued on Page 2

Illegal ganja cultivation found near health institutions; three held

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The city police arrested three individuals, including a minor, for cultivating cannabis in the heart of Visakhapatnam, specifically on the premises of King George Hospital (KGH). This unexpected discovery comes as a serious breach of safety, given that KGH serves as a critical healthcare facility for five surrounding districts.

On Saturday, the police conducted a raid on the premises, leading to the destruction of several ganja plants and the seizure of an additional two kilograms of cannabis from nearby locations. "Our investigations reveal that similar cultivation activities have been reported near Andhra Medical College as well," noted a senior police officer involved in the case. "What's particularly concerning is that these illegal activities appear to have been ongoing for the past 18 months."

Local residents are adamant that change must happen swiftly. "This is not just about enforcement; it's about protecting our community's well-being," expressed Arjun Patil, a concerned local. "We're shocked that this has gone on for so long in such vital areas of our city. We're calling upon the authorities to take swift action."



Police destroy ganja plants and seize an additional two kilograms of cannabis.

The report has ignited discussions about the necessity for enhanced safety measures and oversight for public institutions. In response to the public's outcry, police officials are pledging a thorough crackdown on any further illegal cannabis cultivation within the city. "We take this matter very seriously," stated a senior police officer, who was part of the recent operation. Continued on Page 2



APTIDCO plans housing project in 200 acres in Kothuru Tadepalli

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Township and Infrastructure Development Corporation (APTIDCO) is planning to construct houses for economically disadvantaged and middle-class individuals in the NTR district. To facilitate this, APTIDCO officials are in discussions with Revenue officials to identify suitable land for acquisition in the area. APTIDCO aims to build houses on approximately 200 acres in the district.

Currently, the Revenue officials are focusing on land located in Kothuru Tadepalli, within the Vijayawada Rural mandal, near Vijayawada. They have already prepared a report concerning 60 acres of land and are actively searching for an additional 150 acres. The officials plan to acquire land at a price of Rs. 1.20 crore per acre. In comparison to

other areas in the district, the land prices in Kothuru Tadepalli are relatively low, which is why the officials have selected this village.

After the bifurcation, the TDP has formed the government in the State for a second time, with N Chandrababu Naidu assuming the role of Chief Minister. During this period, Chandrababu gave special attention to the TIDCO houses and plans to distribute the flats that have been completed and are ready for occupancy. Additionally, the State government is seeking a loan from HUDCO to complete the unfinished TIDCO houses and initiate a new project.

To proceed with the land acquisition, APTIDCO officials approached the NTR district administration. Following a series of meetings, Kothuru Tadepalli was selected as the site. Continued on Page 2

Vijayawada Rural Revenue officials have already prepared report regarding 60 acres

Srisailem will be developed on the lines of Tirumala: CM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has announced plans to develop the Srisailem Temple and its surrounding areas into a major tourist attraction. After the darshan of the presiding deity at Srisailem Temple, the Chief Minister stressed the need to promote the region's cultural heritage and natural beauty, which would help boost tourism and local economies.

The Chief Minister revealed that a committee will be formed to oversee the development of the Srisailem Temple and the Nallamala forest area. The committee will include Ministers Anam Rama Narayana Reddy, Kandula Durgesh, and BC Janardhan Reddy, and will

Committee comprising Ministers to be formed to oversee the developmental works



be tasked with preparing a master plan for the area's development. The Chief Minister called for a comprehensive report that incorporates suggestions from MPs and MLAs, which will help inform the final

plan. The report will also include input from the Forest, Endowments, and district collectors, with the goal of enhancing both religious tourism and environmental conservation.

The CM emphasised that the development of the Srisailem Temple complex will be modelled on the lines of the Tirumala Temple. He also highlighted the need to improve infrastructure in the region, stating that the Sunni Penta area, a prominent location near Srisailem, should be made more accessible and habitable for visitors. Continued on Page 2

DELAYED SALARY

Spouses of Steel Plant workers take to streets

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a heart-wrenching display of desperation, the spouses of regular employees at the Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited-Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) have taken to the streets, voicing their anguish over delayed salary payments. This unprecedented move reflects the dire financial straits faced by thousands of steel plant families, with mounting bills and empty wallets painting a grim picture of daily life. "Every month, my husband's

gross salary is Rs 58,000, and we usually manage to bring home around Rs 32,000 after deductions," shared a visibly distressed spouse of a steel melt shop employee in a conversation with The Pioneer. "But now, we've only received a meager half month's salary for September, and October's salary hasn't come at all. As a homemaker with two young children, I'm struggling to manage even basic household expenses. It's heartbreaking to wonder if I can afford essential items like toothpaste." Continued on Page 2



27 killed in suicide bombing at railway station in Pakistan

PNS ■ ISLAMABAD/KARACHI

At least 27 people, including 14 security forces, were killed and 62 others injured on Saturday in a suicide bombing at a railway station in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, officials said.

The explosion ripped through the railway station of the provincial capital Quetta as passengers gathered on the platform before the departure of the Jaffar Express, scheduled to depart for Peshawar at 9:00 am. There were around 100 people on the platform when the blast occurred.

"So far, we have received 27 bodies and at least 62 people are injured, with some in critical condition," said Dr Wasim Baig of the Quetta Trauma Centre.

Dr Arbab Kamran Kasi, Managing Director of the Trauma Centre, warned that the death toll may increase since several wounded individuals, aged 20 to 50, remain in critical condition.

Quetta Division Commissioner Hamza Shafiqat said it was a suicide attack targeting security forces and civilians were also hit badly.

OBTUSE ANGLE



'Effects of premature birth could persist into adulthood': P5

CANADA ENDS FAST TRACK STUDY VISA PROGRAMME

Indian students likely to be impacted most

PNS ■ OTTAWA

Canada has ended with immediate effect the popular fast track study visa programme, SDS, a major policy decision that is likely to impact scores of international students, including from India.

The processing time for students applying under the Student Direct Stream (SDS) was significantly shorter and approval rates higher, something that will change after Canada ended the scheme on Friday.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in September had announced on X: "We're granting 35 per cent fewer international student permits this

year. And next year, that number's going down by another 10 per cent."

"Immigration is an advantage for our economy - but when bad actors abuse the system and take advantage of students, we crack down," he added in the post as the Canadian government said it was looking to reduce the number of temporary residents.

The move comes amid the ongoing diplomatic row between India and Canada. According to the Indian High Commission here, India is the largest source country of foreign stu-



dents with an estimated 4,27,000 Indian students studying in Canada. "Canada is committed to giving all international students equal and fair access to the application process

for study permits," the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) said in a statement on Friday.

Canada's goal is to "strengthen programme integrity, address student vulnerability, and give all students equal and fair access to the application process, as well as a positive academic experience," the statement said.

The SDS was launched in 2018 to provide faster processing for eligible post-secondary students, it said, adding, it was eventually opened to

legal residents of Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, India, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Senegal, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and Vietnam.

There was a similar Nigeria Student Express (NSE) for prospective university students from Nigeria; it too has ended along with the SDS, the statement said, adding, both the SDS and the NSE initiatives ended on Friday. The IRCC gave a cut off time of 2:00 pm ET on Friday (00:30 IST Saturday), and said all the eligible SDS and NSE applications received before it will be processed under these streams.

When all Ministers were floored at Yadagirigutta!

Those whose memories are not like sieves will remember that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy's first grand visit to the Lakshminarasimha Swamy shrine at Yadagirigutta did not pan out well. Perhaps calculated steps in seating arrangements got everyone talking. Picture this: all but one of the Ministers present were seated on high stools. The eyes of the lone Minister who was seated on a smaller stool looked like embers of an agarbatti. The setup then looked almost like a scene mirroring social structure, with all forward caste Ministers sitting pretty up high. On the whole, the scene did not sit well with the public, who called out the glaring (sit)uational optics. Any backlash? Oh, it was intense. So much so that on the second visit of CM and company, those stools disappeared faster than anyone could say 'protocol'. This time, everyone was seated on the floor—a move clearly intended to smooth things over. Although they were literally on the same level before the Lord, none got a chance to lord it over. The grapevine has it that even the Endowments Minister did not quite make it to the front row. It looks like beneath the level 'playing' field, the seating drama at Yadagirigutta is not quite over yet.

meet in Mumbai, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar was positioned centrally with multiple mics, while Reddy's presence seemed more peripheral. Such arrangements are typically reviewed by the Chief Minister's team to ensure there are no protocol violations. Still, if such things happen, surely there is more to it than meets the eye. No camera lens can capture all of that. It is one thing for Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to publicly affirm his loyalty and proximity to the Gandhi family and assert that he and AICC are on the same page and quite another for the Congress overlords' differential outreach to party's regional heads.

Gandhi Bhavan is an open house unlike Telangana Bhavan

The word on the street is that Gandhi Bhavan is like a journalist's dream hangout when compared to the nightmarish

uses on TV and a two-minute viral video clip". Ironically, every morning, KTR and Harish Rao are spotted sharing newspaper clippings, suggesting they still love the good old ink when it suits them! A senior journalist & Political Editor of a prominent English newspaper pointed out, "Almost everyone picks my call but KTR. Never did he". When a seasoned journalist from a Telugu newspaper, who had been trolled by BRS loyalists for a trip to Seoul, caught KTR's eye, the BRS working president actually posted the journalist's exclusive story on the Seetha Rama Project. The journalist hit back, asking why so much baseless abuse is hurled at journalists when they are using his exclusive story to take on the Congress.

'Political bombs', damp squib, or carpet bombing?

Ahead of Diwali, when Revenue Minister Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy talked about 'political bombs' in the office in Telangana, many people, particularly political circles, started guessing the probabilities in the wake of multiple ongoing probes into scams relat-

REPORTERS' DIARY

doors-shut vibe of Telangana Bhavan. At Gandhi Bhavan, reporters are welcomed like family—you can stroll into just about any room, and everyone from the spokesperson to the MLA or Minister will pull out a chair, saying, "Come, sit". It's almost like an open house with hardly any instances of journalists being asked to leave. Now, flip the scene to Telangana Bhavan, and it is a contrasting story. Walking into any room? Not a chance! If the working president is in, you will need a bit of inside help to even make it past the door. And if you do manage to get in, do not expect to stay long—forget about anyone offering you a seat. You will be asked to leave. Telangana Bhavan is not exactly the cozy, journalist-friendly spot, no matter how close others pretend you are.

BRS doesn't want print media but falls back on their 'dam'ning reports

Here's the real dope on media antics of the BRS' brass. It is no secret—they don't seem to give a rat's ass about old school journalists. If you are from a typical print media outlet, you need a lot more than good luck to get their attention: you need pluck to let them realise that you are there on duty. But if you are from a YouTube channel or an agency; they are rolling out the red carpet! It is as if there is an unwritten warrant of precedence: YouTubers and agencies first, traditional journalists last, if at all. And Chief Minister Revanth Reddy, never missing a beat, summed it up perfectly: "For BRS, it is all about three min-

ing to Kaleshwaram project, phone tapping, Formula E racing irregularities and the like. Two weeks have passed and God knows when those 'political bombs', if any, will go off in Telangana. Meanwhile, taunts and jokes about the impending 'bombs' have reduced the potential 'noise levels' of those explosives to that of a damp squib, resulting in eruption of laughter at the most. Among people celebrating Diwali it did not have half the impact of pop pop crackers. Shrewd politicians still point out that the period of bursting firecrackers (not excluding political bombs) continues right up to Karthika Pournami (November 15). Bombs do scare dogs. Yet, some are commenting 'Barking dogs seldom bite', not realising that even strays will coop themselves up in anything that looks like a bomb shelter when people set off a variety of 'bombs' to celebrate Diwali. Those who are convinced that there might be no 'political bombs' at all say even roars of tigers and lions are enough to send shivers down the spine of people and animals in their vicinity. Given the line-up of political rivals on either side, some people say both sides will make only serious comments without any action. Another indication is that, come December 7, the Congress government in TG will be completing a year. So, it is launching celebrations starting November 14. Unless, the Minister meant 'carpet bombing' starting a day ahead of Karthika Pournami, nothing much is in the offing, say those who believe in 'Nanna-puli' fable.

(With inputs from Naveena Ghanate and K Venkateswarlu)

Visuals of Revanth and Rahul suggest they are not in sync

A contrived smile can conceal many bitter emotions, but a picture or a clip can speak a thousand words. Keen political observers perceive a strain in the relations between the All India Congress Committee (AICC) leadership and Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. During AICC leader Rahul Gandhi's recent visit to Telangana, the interactions between the two leaders appeared formal to a fault, lacking the warmth typically associated with bonds that obviously go beyond intra-party political connections. At least going by the visuals, no such bonding was visible. Further, on Rahul Gandhi's birthday, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy publicly conveyed his wishes, but there was no reciprocal gesture from Rahul Gandhi on the birthday of the Chief Minister, raising pertinent questions about their rapport. Although the CM himself issued a statement that Rahul wished him, the larger question is: Was Rahul Gandhi's team so busy that they could not put out one tweet? Perception about the widening faasla between AICC and Revanth is not new. The faasla was perhaps made during a rally in Wayanad, Kerala, after Priyanka had filed her nomination papers. On that platform, Revanth was seated at a corner not normally assigned to a Chief Minister, while the Karnataka CM made himself comfortable between Rahul and Priyanka. Similarly, at a press

MANGOES FROM GANNAVARAM MP Sivanath to talk to Union Minister about exporting

Farmers seek subsidies for fruit covers, harvesters and other equipment

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

MP Kesinei Sivanath, also known as Chinni, has assured mango farmers that he would speak with Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammoohan Naidu about the possibility of exporting quality mangoes from the Gannavaram Airport to international markets. He urged the farmers to enhance the quality of their mango production to facilitate cargo air exports.



During a meeting at his office in NTR Bhavan, Gurunanak Colony, Vijayawada, mango producers from the Farmers Producing Organisation (FPO) in

Reddigudem mandal presented mangoes to MP Chinni and discussed exporting their produce to other States and countries.

The mango farmers requested that the MP provide subsidies for fruit covers, plastic trays, harvesters, and other necessary items to improve the quality of mango production. They also asked for an awareness meeting to educate all farmers on using fruit cov-

ers to enhance their mango quality. Additionally, they sought the inauguration of an Integrated Pack House to benefit the farmers.

Concluding the discussions, MP Chinni assured the farmers that he would work towards initiating mango exports from Gannavaram Airport. He promised to make the necessary arrangements and noted that if exports commenced, the farmers will benefit from better prices for their mangoes.

Spouses of Steel...

Continued from Page 1

Another spouse, whose husband is employed in the CMS Department, expressed deep frustration over the oppressive silence surrounding their plight. "We're too afraid to speak out directly due to the government's restrictions on employee protests. The situation is getting worse by the day, and our families are suffering. We felt we had no choice but to take to the streets to draw attention to this unbearable situation," she lamented.

The urgency of the crisis has prompted the CITU-affiliated RINL-VSP trade union to announce a massive protest scheduled for November 10, which will involve employees and their families. Trade union leader J Ayodhyaram noted, "For the first time in history, spouses are protesting due to the non-payment of salaries. As of November 9, 12,600 regular employees haven't received a staggering 45 days' salary, totaling Rs 86 crore. On top of that, 14,000 contractual workers stand unpaid for four to five months. We refuse to be silenced any longer."

Uttarakhand Foundation Day celebrated at Raj Bhavan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Governor of Andhra Pradesh S Abdul Nazeer was the chief guest at the Foundation Day celebrations of Uttarakhand held at Durbar Hall in Raj Bhavan on Saturday. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor has said that Uttarakhand is rich in natural resources, and that the State is popularly called Dev Bhoomi, the land of gods, due to the presence of some of the most ancient temples of Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri and Yamunotri, the Char-Dhams.



The programme commenced with a video message of Lt Gen (Retd) Gurmit Singh, Governor of Uttarakhand, followed by traditional folk dance performance by students of ICON Public School. Students of Uttarakhand studying in educational institutions in and around Vijayawada participated in the programme. Dr M Hari Jawaharlal, Secretary to Governor and officers and staff members of Raj Bhavan attended the programme.

relationship and bonding among all the people of the country, and promote mutual understanding between different States and Union Territories, through the concept of 'One Nation - One People'.

174 exemplary teachers to receive awards tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the occasion of the National Education Day, School Education Department Secretary Kona Sasidhar, and Director V Vijaya Rama Raju announced on Saturday that the postponed Teachers' Day celebrations will take place on November 11 at A Convention in Vijayawada. The delay was due to the recent floods in River Krishna and Budameru Rivulet, which prevented the original State-level celebrations.

The State government will recognise 174 exemplary teachers with the prestigious Best Teachers' Awards. The honourees include 75 teachers from school, 26 from college, 16 from polytechnic institutions, 32 university professors, 19 degree college lecturers, and four teachers from engineering and pharmacy colleges.

TODAY ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:	Sukla Paksha
Tithi:	Navami: Nov 09 10:45 PM to Nov 10 09:01 PM
	Dashami: Nov 10 09:01 PM to Nov 11 06:46 PM
Nakshatram:	Dhanishta: Nov 09 11:47 AM to Nov 10 10:59 AM
	Shatabhisha: Nov 10 10:59 AM to Nov 11 09:40 AM
Rahukalam:	4:13 PM to 5:37 PM
Yamagandam:	12:00 PM to 1:24 PM
Varjyam:	05:48 PM to 07:18 PM
Gulika:	2:48 PM to 4:13 PM
Amritkalam:	02:52 AM to 04:22 AM
Vijay Muhurtham:	11:37 AM to 12:22 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER
Forecast: Mostly Sunny
Temp: 34°C
Humidity: 62%
Sunrise: 6:09 AM
Sunset: 5:34 PM
Updated: November 9, 2024 5:00 PM

'A milestone in AP's growth'...

Continued from Page 1

He further stressed that the seaplane service would serve as a catalyst for economic growth by attracting more tourists and generating employment opportunities in the State.

Praising Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu for his rapid rise in national politics, the CM noted, "Seaplane travel is an innovative opportunity that will play a crucial role in the State's development. We must fully embrace the advances in technology to create wealth and income, just as we did with IT, which is now a global force. In the coming years, seaplanes could be as common as airplanes in providing transportation to tourists."

The Chief Minister also discussed the broader vision for the State's future, focusing on how technological innovations and improved infrastructure will contribute to economic prosperity. He stressed that with the seaplane service, Andhra Pradesh could expect a transformation in both tourism and transporta-

tion. "This new service will not only enhance tourism but also create job opportunities for thousands of people," he added.

Speaking on the State's overall development, CM reflected on the challenges faced under the previous government and the ongoing efforts to restore order. "We are working hard to bring the State back on track after the previous administration's failures. Our goal is to fix the administration and restore the State's lost glory," Chandrababu stated. He praised the NDA government for its efforts in revitalising the State, particularly in improving roads and infrastructure.

Stressing the importance of maintaining law and order to attract tourists, CM noted, "A peaceful and pleasant atmosphere is essential for tourism to thrive. We must ensure that visitors feel safe and welcome." He also outlined his goal of making Andhra Pradesh the top destination for tourists in the country, with an eye on leveraging public-private

partnerships (PPP) to drive wealth creation and industry growth.

The launch event at Patalganga was attended by several local leaders and public representatives, who gave the Chief Minister and the Union Minister a warm welcome. Ministers N Md. Farooq, Kandula Durgesh, and Anam Ramnarayan Reddy, along with MLAs Budda Rajasekhara Reddy and Gouth Charitha Reddy, joined the Chief Minister for the celebrations. The District Collector, Joint Collector, and police officials were also present.

Later, the dignitaries traveled via ropeway to the Srisailem temple, where they had a darshan of Lord Bramaramba Mallikharjuna Swamy, marking a fitting conclusion to the day's events.

The launch of the seaplane service is expected to provide a major boost to Andhra Pradesh's tourism industry, offering a unique travel experience while promoting the State as a premier destination for both domestic and international tourists.

SpiceJet set to launch...

Continued from Page 1

With rights to operate seaplane services on 20 routes, including Lakshadweep, Hyderabad, Guwahati, and Shillong, the airline is preparing to roll out connectivity across key routes as the infrastructure becomes ready.

Ajay Singh said, "Seaplanes have the potential to transform India's regional connectivity, opening up access to some of the most stunning, yet remote parts of the country. SpiceJet has always dared to dream big and with the support of visionary leaders like Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Union Minister K Rammoohan Naidu, we are taking concrete steps to bring seaplane operations to life in India once again. We are excited to help drive this initiative forward, partnering closely with the gov-

ernment and civil aviation authorities to ensure these services become a reality and a success."

Avani Singh, CEO, Spice Shuttle, said, "Our journey in regional connectivity has been a purposeful one, rooted in the belief that everyone, no matter how remote, deserves access to affordable and efficient air travel, and today, we are excited to be at the forefront of seaplane operations in India."

"Seaplanes can be a true game-changer for a country like ours, where diverse geographies—coastlines, islands, and riverine regions—often present infrastructure challenges. With seaplanes, we can transcend these barriers and bring the joy and benefits of connectivity to coastal areas, islands, and remote inland destinations," she said.

Illegal ganja...

Continued from Page 1

"Our goal is to ensure that Visakhapatnam's institutions remain secure from any such illegal activities." In the wake of the arrests, people are advocating for stronger security protocols surrounding educational and healthcare facilities. They stress the critical need for accountability and transparency from local authorities.

"We cannot let this happen again," emphasised activist Priya Nair. "It's vital that we collaborate with law enforcement to protect our children and families."

Srisailem will...

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister reiterated that development and welfare are the two central pillars of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) vision. "Through development, we can increase wealth and thereby boost income, which in turn will enable us to roll out more welfare programmes for the people," Chandrababu said, stressing the importance of infrastructure and economic growth for the State's future prosperity.

Chandrababu also took the opportunity to criticise the previous government, saying that Andhra Pradesh had been left in a state of disarray due to the "misdeeds" of its leaders. He highlighted that the State was "on a ventilator" until the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government took charge.

APTIDCO plans...

Continued from Page 1

The officials inspected the land along with Vijayawada Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) K. Chaitanya and other officials from the Rural mandal. According to sources, APTIDCO has requested 200 acres, and the Revenue officials have completed a comprehensive report on the 60 acres so far. Sources indicate that Kothuru Tadepalli village is an upland area with a lower risk of flooding. However, the Revenue officials selected agricultural land near the Taraka Rama Lift Irrigation Scheme (TRLIS) next to the Budameru Rivulet. Local farmers reported that these lands were submerged during the recent floods.

Meanwhile, local farmers expressed their willingness to give up their mango gardens, located on the other side of the Polavaram Right Main Canal, for the APTIDCO project under the land acquisition process.

DoPPW organises DLC camps in Visakhapatnam

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a move to simplify the life certificate submission process for pensioners, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) is organising specialised camps in Visakhapatnam on November 11 as part of the Nationwide DLC Campaign 3.0. This initiative, which runs throughout November, leverages advanced Face Authentication technology to allow pensioners to submit their Digital Life Certificates (DLCs) using Aadhaar-based recognition on Android smartphones. This eliminates the need for biometric devices and in-person visits to pension disbursing authorities, making the process more accessible for elderly and disabled pensioners.

The DLC system has seen significant advancements since its inception in 2014. The JeevanPrmaan platform, introduced in 2021, further streamlined the process. The latest addition, Face authentication technology takes convenience to the next level. The 2023 campaign successfully covered 100 locations, facilitating the submission of over 1.47 crore DLCs. The current campaign expands to 800 locations nationwide, ensuring wider accessibility for pensioners across the country.

'Integrated terminal building at Gannavaram by June 2025'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Chief Minister has set a target for the completion of the new integrated terminal building by June 2025 and instructed the officials to ensure that the terminal's design reflects the region's rich cultural heritage.

The Chief Minister reviewed the progress of the ongoing expansion work at Gannavaram Airport, near Vijayawada, during a meeting at his residence in Undavalli on Saturday. The review included discussions on the construction of the new integrated terminal building and other infrastructure developments. Union Minister K Rammohan Naidu, State Minister BC Janardhan Reddy, senior officials from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and State government representatives attended the meeting.

The Chief Minister set a target for the completion of the new integrated terminal building by June 2025 and instructed the officials to ensure that the terminal's design reflects the region's rich cultural heritage. He suggested that the design of the terminal should be inspired by the traditional Kuchipudi dance form, stating that the current designs were not as attractive and should better reflect the State's cultural identity. "The terminal building should showcase our cul-



The Chief Minister set a target for the completion of the new integrated terminal building by June 2025 and instructed the officials to ensure that the terminal's design reflects the region's rich cultural heritage. He suggested that the design of the terminal should be inspired by the traditional Kuchipudi dance form, stating that the current designs were not as attractive and should better reflect the State's cultural identity

tural traditions and heritage, and the interior designs must highlight the beauty of our handicrafts and arts," he said. The Chief Minister was briefed by aviation authorities, who provided a presentation on the current status and progress of the expansion work. The new terminal is being constructed at a cost of ₹611 crore, with 58.5 per cent

of the work already completed. The Chief Minister was informed that the construction of the Air Traffic Control (ATC) tower, which is being built at a cost of ₹85 crore, is 52 per cent complete.

The Chief Minister discussed plans to enhance air connectivity across the State. He revealed that the government is considering the development of new

airstrips at five locations, including Mulapeta, Kuppam, Dagadarthi, Tadipalligudem, and an airstrip between Anantapur and Tadipatri.

The CM said: "We are planning to introduce airstrips at strategic locations to improve connectivity and boost economic activity in the region. By expanding air connectivity, we aim to drive economic growth and promote regional development."

The Chief Minister urged the Ministry of Civil Aviation to cooperate with the State government's plans and decisions, emphasising the importance of expanding air connectivity as a key driver of economic progress.

APFERWA launches large-scale rainwater harvesting initiative

To boost groundwater levels and conserve valuable rainwater

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Andhra Pradesh Federation of Resident Welfare Associations (APFERWA) has initiated a robust rainwater harvesting programme in Visakhapatnam to tackle the ongoing water scarcity issue. Over the past five months, the federation has created around 70 rainwater harvesting pits in various colonies throughout the city, representing a major step forward in sustainable water management practices. The initiative, dubbed the "Rainwater Harvesting Pits" programme, aims to boost groundwater levels and conserve valuable rainwater through community-driven efforts. The programme has drawn inspiration from the success story of JR Nagar, a neighbourhood near Venkajipalem, where residents have been actively harvesting rainwater since 2010.

"By constructing 15 rainwater harvesting pits and linking them to home terraces, we have dramatically reduced our dependence on external water sources," explained K.S.R. Murthy, president of the JR Nagar Resident Welfare Association. "We cleaned dilapidated wells and connected them to the rainwater pipelines from our terraces. This has allowed us to capture a substantial amount of rainwater



A rainwater harvesting pit arranged by the A.P. Federation of Resident Welfare Associations, at Simhapuri Layout in Visakhapatnam

that would otherwise be lost."

The impact of this initiative echoes throughout the community. Groundwater levels in JR Nagar have seen remarkable improvements, allowing residents to access water from borewells at a much shallower depth. As a result, this success story has gained international recognition, establishing JR Nagar as a model for other communities in Andhra Pradesh and beyond.

Building on this successful foundation, APFERWA has strategically expanded the rainwater harvesting program, now encompassing over 150 RWAs under the dynamic leadership of President Uday Shirname. The federation has secured Rs 5 lakh through corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions to bolster these projects.

"Our primary goal is to increase water self-sufficiency by conserving rainwater and recharging groundwater levels," stated Shirname. "The success of this initiative has inspired many RWAs to take independent action and build their own rainwater harvesting pits. This is a clear indication that when communities come together, they can develop sustainable solutions to pressing challenges."

APFERWA's rainwater harvesting initiative stands as a powerful testament to the potential of community-led action. By embracing sustainable water management practices, the federation is not only addressing the immediate water crisis faced by residents, but also laying a foundation for a more sustainable future for generations to come.

TDP leaders from erstwhile Visakhapatnam appointed to key positions

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Several leaders from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in the erstwhile Visakhapatnam district have been appointed as chairpersons of various State corporations, as part of the second list of 59 nominated posts released by the government on Saturday. This move marks a significant development for the party, with key figures from different constituencies securing important positions.

Among the prominent appointees, Pranav Gopal, the president of the A.P. Telugu Nadu Students' Federation (TNSF), a student wing of the TDP, has been named the chairperson of the Visakhapatnam Metro Region Development Authority (VMRDA). Known for his leadership in student politics, Pranav Gopal's appointment reflects the party's continued support for the youth leadership in the region.

Kidari Sravan Kumar, the son of the late TDP MLA Kidari Sarveswara Rao from Araku Valley, has been appointed as the chairperson of the A.P. Girijan Co-operative Corporation Limited. This marks a significant recognition of his role in the party and his commitment to the development of the tribal areas of the State.

In a significant development, Gandhi Babjee, the TDP city president, has been appointed as the chairperson of the A.P.

Cooperative Oilseeds Grower's Federation Limited. Babjee, who served as the TDP Visakhapatnam South Constituency in-charge for over four years, had to sacrifice his MLA ticket as part of an alliance arrangement but has now been rewarded with a key position. Further reinforcing TDP's influence in the region, Seethamaraju Sudhakar, the TDP Visakhapatnam South in-charge, was named the chairperson of NTR Vaidya Seva. Sudhakar, who had switched allegiances from the YSRCP to the TDP before the elections, has now been given a significant post within the healthcare sector.

TDP leader Siyyari Donnu Dora, who had sacrificed his MLA ticket from Araku Valley constituency, was appointed as the chairperson of the APSRTC Regional Board for the Vizianagaram Zone. His appointment highlights TDP's commitment to enhancing transport services in the region.

Other key appointments include Malla Surendra, who will head the A.P. Gavra Welfare and Development Corporation from Anakapalli; P.V.G. Kumar, who will lead the A.P. Koppala Velama Welfare and Development Corporation from Madugula; and P. Nageswara Rao, who has been appointed the chairperson of the A.P. Road Development Corporation from Yelamanchili.



The cake mixing ceremony held at Hotel Novotel Varun in Vijayawada on Saturday. (Photo: Ch.Vijaya Bhaskar)

Cake mixing ceremony held

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Novotel Vijayawada Varun, on Saturday, hosted a vibrant cake-mixing ceremony, celebrating togetherness and community spirit on its scenic terrace. This cherished tradition invited guests to mix a blend of dried fruits, nuts, and spices, forming the base for the hotel's signature holiday cakes. The lively gathering was filled with laughter as guests exchanged stories and baking tips, creating an atmosphere of warmth and festivity. Adding to the excitement, a grape stomping activity allowed participants to expe-

perience the joy of traditional winemaking firsthand. With fresh grapes beneath their feet, guests enthusiastically embraced this messy, but delightful tradition, strengthening bonds and creating lasting memories.

Reflecting on the event, Manager Manish Kumar Pathak expressed pride in its success: "The cake mixing and grape stomping event has been a fantastic way to start our holiday celebrations, fostering camaraderie among our guests. We're committed to celebrating culinary traditions and crafting memorable experiences."

BLOs asked to prepare accurate voter lists

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

MM Naik, Secretary to the Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairy Development and Fisheries, and Krishna District Electoral List Observer, has suggested that the officials concerned work to create an accurate voter list by registering new voters, making changes, and additions to the current voter list. Later, he spoke to the Booth Level Officers (BLOs) regarding the conduct of the Special Summary Revision (SSR).

As part of the Special Summary Revision of the voters' list, Naik attended a meeting for the various political party leaders and election officials which was held in Machilipatnam on Saturday. In this connection, he observed



the reception of applications, registration, additions, and changes in the voters' list. Speaking on the occasion, MM Naik said that new voters besides those who wished to make changes in the voter list are interested in the online mode instead of offline. BLOs are doing this process by using the apps, he said. For the process, voters should submit their Aadhar card to ensure an

accurate electoral list. Also, it would be useful to delete double entries in the lists, he said. Later, the BLOs explained to the observer about the SSR and said that many voters have not submitted their Aadhar cards. So, they are deleting duplicate voters with the help of house address and surname. Also, they are deleting expired persons' votes in the lists, they explained.

500-bed ESIC super specialty hospital in Amaravati soon

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government is moving forward with the establishment of a 500-bed Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) Super Specialty Hospital and medical college in Amaravati, aimed at improving healthcare access for insured workers and their families. Under the leadership of V Anjaneyulu, Director of Insurance Medical Services, a propos-

al for the project was recently discussed at the 194th ESIC Corporation meeting.

The hospital will feature 150 super specialty beds and serve over 14.5 lakh ESIC-insured individuals across the State, including four lakh in the Amaravati region. It is expected to address healthcare gaps post-bifurcation, as most ESIC facilities are now in Telangana.

Minister Vasamsetti Subash expressed gratitude

for the support of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in realising the project, which aligns with Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's vision for rapid development in the capital region. A 35-acre plot within the Capital Region Development Authority's jurisdiction has been proposed for the facility. The State government will submit the proposal for final approval and funding.



Minister reviews law and order issues with DGP

Crimes against women, social media abuses, illegal ganja trade discussed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Home Minister Vangalapati Anitha has conducted a comprehensive review on the law and order situation across the State. The virtual meeting included the Director General of Police, Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, Additional Director General (Intelligence), all District Superintendents of Police, Commissioners of Police, and other senior officials.

The discussion centered on critical areas such as crimes against women, social media abuses, the illegal ganja trade, and enhancing law enforcement practices. Following the review, the HM and DGP issued several directives to ensure swift and effective action on many issues.

Anitha instructed the officials to focus on cases involving missing women and girls, directing all districts to establish dedicated teams to prioritise these investigations. Anitha called for a daily review mechanism, led by the DGP through morning teleconferences, to

closely monitor the progress of these cases and implement corrective actions as needed. She also proposed the establishment of special courts to expedite the prosecution of offenses against women and children, ensuring faster delivery of justice. The Home Minister instructed that charge sheets be filed promptly and arrests made without delay in all such cases to prevent unnecessary backlogs.

The Minister highlighted recent actions taken to address abusive content on social media, which included 22 arrests, notices served to 40 individuals, and 181 cases registered. She directed that stringent legal sections related to organised crime and criminal conspiracy be applied to these cases to send a strong deterrent message.

Acknowledging the recent success of the Anti-Narcotics Task Force under an IG rank officer, the HM applauded efforts that led to the seizure of 25,251 kg of ganja, 373 vehicles, and the arrest of 2,237 accused.

MP Sivanath meets Governor, seeks development of cricket grounds



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Cricket Association president and Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath met Governor S Abdul Nazeer at the Governor's Bungalow on Saturday. A letter of request was submitted to the Governor on behalf of ACA. The letter of request sought permission for the development of cricket grounds in several universities across the State. The ACA president also explained the steps that ACA will take for the development of cricket in the State. Governor Abdul Nazeer responded positively to Kesineni Sivanath's request. ACA secretary Sana Satish and treasurer Dandamudi Srinivas were present.

Proposed COC project at KGH delayed

Union Ministry of Tribal Welfare reportedly plans to establish COC at AIIMS now

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The proposed Centre for Comprehensive Care (COC) project intended for King George Hospital (KGH) in Visakhapatnam has been delayed, sparking calls for reconsideration from hospital authorities and patients. Initially, KGH was chosen to house the COC to serve healthcare needs across North Andhra districts. However, recent updates reveal that the Union Ministry of Tribal Welfare now plans to establish the COC at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in Vijayawada, prompting concerns from experts and locals.

Healthcare professionals argue that Visakhapatnam, given its proximity to the North Andhra and Godavari regions,



is better suited to meet local healthcare demands. "Bringing the COC to Visakhapatnam will allow more immediate care to an underserved tribal population," stated a senior

KGH medical officer, noting that the current plan creates logistical challenges for patients needing critical care. Dr Anitha, a General physician at KGH, highlighted that the hos-

pital regularly treats around 100 tribal patients monthly for conditions like sickle cell anaemia. "These communities rely on accessible diagnostic tests and treatment nearby," she

emphasised, underscoring the strain caused by travel to distant centers.

The government has allocated Rs. 6.50 crore for LAN support and Rs 50 lakh for diagnostic equipment, with KGH ready to set up a lab within its blood bank. "KGH has the infrastructure and skilled personnel to make the COC successful," noted the hospital's project coordinator, explaining that only equipment setup remains.

The Union Tribal Ministry's COC initiative aims to support sickle cell anaemia patients across India. In its report to the Ministry, KGH highlighted the urgent need for a COC in Visakhapatnam due to the high prevalence of the disease in local tribal areas, where regular transfusions are often necessary. "In tribal regions, sick-

le cell anaemia is widespread, and KGH is a crucial resource for these patients," explained Dr. Sivananda, Superintendent of KGH, adding that State support often falls short for comprehensive treatment.

Despite KGH's readiness, authorities have confirmed that the initial phase of COC centres will begin at AIIMS Vijayawada. This decision has disappointed KGH officials and locals who argue that establishing the centre in Visakhapatnam would address the unique healthcare challenges of the region. "We hope this decision will be reconsidered for the benefit of our patients," Dr. Sivananda expressed. The delay has intensified concerns about meeting the healthcare needs of North Andhra's underserved communities.

50 industrial units to be set up in Machilipatnam in 1st yr

Minister Kollu Ravindra says 100 acres will be allotted to MSME Park

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As part of the Andhra Pradesh government's initiative to establish Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Parks in every Assembly constituency, the Minister for Mines & Geology and Excise, Kollu Ravindra, has unveiled plans to launch at least 50 industries in the Machilipatnam constituency within the first year. He aims to secure approximately 100 acres of land dedicated to an MSME Park in the region to support this goal.

At an MSME awareness meeting held at the ZP Convention Hall in Machilipatnam on Saturday, Minister Ravindra emphasised the State's focus on completing the Machilipatnam Port by 2025. He highlighted the city's



historical reputation for boat manufacturing and its potential to attract more industrial investments.

Under the State's New Industrial Policy, he envisions 'an industrialist in every household', supporting small and local businesses, especially those using natural resources

like weeds removed from canals, which are being transformed into household items. For these ventures, the government plans to set up centres employing members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

To encourage local industry growth, Minister Ravindra noted that new industrialists

will be eligible for a 50 per cent subsidy under the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). He also pledged to restart the construction of the previously stalled Jewelry Park and to provide support to other new industries through the P4 (Public-Private Partnership

Policy for Prosperity) Policy, introduced by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

In his address, he called on women entrepreneurs to establish industries in Machilipatnam and reinforced the government's commitment to creating employment opportunities for around 20 lakh unemployed youth across the State. Minister Ravindra's vision for Machilipatnam reflects a broader strategy to foster a robust local economy through industrial growth and job creation.

APSRTC Chairman Konakalla Narayana Rao, Krishna District Collector DK Balaji, DIC Manager R Venkata Rao, APMSMEDC ED Srinivasulu Reddy, faculty member V Swapna, and others were present.

Medical officers told to maintain hospital records flawlessly

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam district Collector A Thameem Ansariya directed the medical officers to maintain hospital records meticulously and provide better services to the patients.

The Collector conducted a surprise inspection to the Primary Health Centre at Ethamukkala village in Kottapatnam mandal on Saturday. She spoke to the pregnant women in the PHC. The Collector asked the doctors the details of how many patients come to the hospital for medical treatment every month, how many pregnant women come for delivery and the medicines given to them since they were diagnosed as pregnant. She also inquired how they monitor the health of pregnant women till delivery is performed.

The Collector inspected the laboratory, labour room, the office room and examined the



hospital records. She personally examined whether all hospital staff attended as per the attendance register. She also inspected the OP registration and anemia register and the laboratory registered.

The Collector expressed anger over mismanagement of registers. She directed the DMHO Suresh Kumar to ensure that all the hospital registers should be maintained uniformly. She

instructed the doctors and medical staff to be high alert on high risk pregnancy cases. She ordered that the doctors themselves should check BP for pregnant women.

She directed the medical officials to display all the medical services being provided in the hospital. DCHS Suribabu and Tahsildar Madhusudan Rao were among those who accompanied the Collector.



Set up NB Units to improve financial condition: Women told

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Krishna district Collector DK Balaji asked the Self-help Groups women to set up Neighborhood Business Units with the help of the Government to improve their financial positions.

The District Level Orientation Programme on 'Neighborhood Business Unit' was organized in the ZP meeting hall here on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, Collector Balaji, who attended the programme as chief guest, said that the State Government has decided for the first time to provide encouragement to women self-help groups to set up Neighborhood Business Units. As a part of this, Krishna district has taken it as an experimental project, he informed.

The Collector noted that 196 women members who are interested in the district had been identified and are being trained. Taking the incentives and facilities provided by the State Government, women should step forward with deter-

mination to do audit business in their neighborhood, so that they can grow up and achieve economic development.

"If you think with a positive attitude, you can achieve anything. Amul milk business started small and today it has a turnover of thousands of crores of rupees across the country. Also, Dhirubhai Ambani's Reliance Company started with a small business and today it is doing business with billions of rupees," the Collector recalled.

State Society for Elimination of Rural Poverty (SERP) Director Padmavathi revealed that the State Government has decided to set up neighborhood business units with the aim of providing local employment opportunities and economic development to women who are educated in self-help groups and are unemployed by organizing them into groups like DWCR. SERP PE B Srinivas and DRDE In-charge PD Aruna, RDO K Swathi were among those who attended the programme.

Take stringent steps to curb illicit liquor brewing: Excise officials told

PNS ■ ELURU

State prohibition and Abkari department Director Nishanth Kumar instructed the excise officials to take stringent steps to curb brewing of illicit liquor in the district, especially in the agency areas.

The Excise Director inspected the liquor depot at Eluru and the Abkari police station at Jangareddygudem on Saturday. Talking to the media on the occasion, Nishanth Kumar said that all brands of



liquor had been made available across the state at all liquor shops. "As per the Government's order, a quarter bottle of quality liquor is being sold at Rs 99 across the state. The check-posts located at

AP-Telangana border areas are being fortified" he revealed, adding that vigil has been enhanced to prevent illegal import of liquor from other states. He made it clear that in his observation, he did not notice violation of MRP and selling liquor more than MRP.

"Setting up of belt liquor shops will not be tolerated. The Chief Minister has given clear instructions in this regard and taken tough action against belt liquor shops," he told the officials.

6 red sander logs seized, one smuggler arrested

PNS ■ KADAPA

The Red Sander Anti Task Force team seized six red sander logs while being transported in a car at M Bavi village in Railway Kodur mandal. DSP G Balreddy said that a Task Force team led by RI Chiranjeevulu and RSI P Nareswari and forest FBO Nageswar Naidu conducted checking of vehicles on Tirupati-Kadapa highway at Reddypalli Cheruvu.

On seeing the police checking, the red sander smugglers jumped off from the car and fled. The police checked and found six red sander logs in the car. The police apprehended one of them. The police seized six red sander logs and the car and SI CH Rafi registered a case.



DGP Dwaraka Tirumala Rao calls on Dy CM Pawan Kalyan

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Director General of Police Dwaraka Tirumala Rao called on deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj on Saturday. The DGP went to the camp office of Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, located at Mangalagiri. The DGP and Pawan Kalyan held discussions on various issues.

It is learnt that both the DGP and Pawan Kalyan discussed the abusive and derogatory posting on social media and assaults and atrocities against women.

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Voter enrolment process should be carried out efficiently: Officials told

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Animal Husbandry and Dairy development Secretary and Roll Observer for SSR 2025, MM Nayak directed the officials concerned to complete the process of voter enrollment and modifications of voter's list efficiently in the district.

MM Nayak held a meeting with district Collector Ch Nagarani, EROs and AEROs here on Saturday and reviewed the process of voter enrollment and modification of voters list. Speaking on the occasion, Nayak told the officials to prepare a list of voters without errors. The EROs should convene meetings with the BLOs and give direction in preparation of the voter list. The list of voters should be error-free by the time it is announced, he directed them.

"The officials should conduct large-scale sweep activities for voter registration. Everyone above 18 years of age should pay special attention to register as a voter, as part of this; awareness programs should be organized in the college to encourage students to register



as voters," he told them.

Nayak asked the Collector, EROs and AEROs to explain to the people on how to register to vote online. Actions should be taken to conduct a special brief revision programme of photo voter lists in all the polling centers in the district. As part of this, all citizens who have completed 18 years of age by January 1 next year, must register their vote in the voter's list, Nayak observed.

Speaking on the occasion, district Collector Nagarani has made it clear that all steps were taken to take up the voter enrollment process expeditiously and flawlessly. She said that there are 20 mandals in the district of which Ganapavaram mandal falls in Unguturu Assembly constituency.

Varra's life under threat, says Rachamallu

PNS ■ PRODDATUR

YSRCP spokesperson Rachamallu Sivaprasada Reddy has demanded that social media activist Varra Ravindra Reddy be produced before court as his life could be under threat going by the sequence of events.

Speaking to media here on Saturday he said, the way the 'TDP-friendly media' were flashing headline after headline and following it up on one hand and officials from DGP, DIG, SP reacting to the news of his arrest and disappearance creates an impression that Ravindra Reddy's life is under threat.

He is just a small-time social media activist questioning the government failures and his name is being taken by the TDP-friendly media and top brass of police shows that there is a conspiracy in the making, he said.



25 KGs of ganja seized, 5 peddlers arrested

PNS ■ ELURU

Eluru Nov 9: The police seized 25 KGs of ganja and arrested five drug peddlers at Somavarappadu village in Denduluru mandal.

Pedavegi CI Venkateswara Rao told the media here on Saturday that on a tip off a police team conducted a raid at Somavarappadu village and found the drug peddlers moving in a suspicious manner.

The police team apprehended them and seized 25 KGs of ganja from them. The peddlers were making preparations to sell the cannabis in retail. A case was registered and the arrested drug peddlers would be produced before the court, the CI added.



'Cyclonic circulation lies over Southwest Bay of Bengal'

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The cyclonic circulation over Southwest Bay of Bengal extending upto 3.6 km above mean sea level persisted over the same area at 0830 hours on Saturday.

Under its influence, a low-pressure area is likely to form over the same area during the next 36 hours. It is likely to move slowly nearly westwards towards Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka coasts dur-

ing the subsequent two days, Meteorological Centre said.

In a daily weather report here, it said that the trough from the above cyclonic circulation over southwest Bay of Bengal to east-central Bay of Bengal extending upto mid-tropospheric levels persists.

Heavy rain is likely to occur at isolated places in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema on November 12 and 13. Thunderstorms

accompanied with lightning are likely to occur at isolated places in South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema from November 11 to 13.

Light to moderate rain or thunder-showers is likely to occur at one or two places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema during the next seven days. Rain occurred at one or two places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema during the last 24 hours, the report added.

You cannot stop caste census, Rahul tells Modi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Leader of the Opposition (LOP) in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, made it clear that Prime Minister Modi cannot stop the caste census across the country. Rahul posted on X regarding this on Saturday.

"Modi ji, caste census started in Telangana from today. We will use the data obtained from this to formulate policies for the development of every section. Soon this will happen in Maharashtra also. Everyone knows that the BJP does not want to conduct a comprehensive caste census in the country. I want to tell Modiji clearly, You cannot stop the caste census across the country. We will pass the caste census in this parliament and break the wall of 50%



on reservations," Rahul said. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy retweeted Rahul's post saying, "Telangana has embarked on a revolutionary journey today with the commencement of enumeration for the caste survey. The promise of our leader Shri @RahulGandhi ji of social justice for all weaker sections is going to be a reality in Telangana and will be based on the above exercise. This day

will be etched in golden letters in history, and we will work hard in the coming days to ensure we are the top state in India in the next-gen initiatives and policies for social justice. #Telangana #CasteSurvey"

TPCC President B. Mahesh Kumar Goud also posted Rahul's post saying "Shri RahulGandhi ji's commitment to equality and social justice shines with the launch of Telangana's caste census under Congress-led State Government. This data will empower every community, creating policies for true inclusive development. Let's make it clear to Modi ji, BJP, and the BRS... 'A true democracy ensures every community is counted, valued and uplifted.' Congress will break down every barrier to fair representation across India.

1 lakh houses will be handed over to beneficiaries by end of Dec: Minister

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Minister for Housing and I&PR K Parthasarathy has made it clear it has been aimed to complete the construction of one lakh houses by the end of December and hand them over to the beneficiaries. The Housing Minister held a meeting with the officials of combined Chittoor district and reviewed the construction process of houses.

Later addressing a press conference here on Saturday, Minister Parthasarathy stated that a massive programme of completing one lakh houses in the State and handing over house keys to the beneficiaries would be undertaken through Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu.



He stated that under PMAY 1 scheme, houses were allocated to the combined Chittoor district of which the construction of 50 percent houses had been completed.

He observed that due to lack of sand in some places the construction works were delayed and at some places

works were delayed due to rain. Similarly, the authorities have been ordered to give preference to supply sand for the layouts of NTR housing colonies, adding that the Housing department officials were asked to bear the transport charges.

"Similarly, houses have been constructed in Kuppam, but the

required electricity facility has yet to be provided by RESCO and APSPDCL in coordination. The authorities concerned have been ordered to take steps to establish a new electrical sub-station to ensure there will be no shortage of electricity for the houses" Minister Parthasarathy made it clear.

Stating that the PMAY 2.0 programme will start from March 2025, he said that houses would be provided to every poor person by sanctioning houses from the Central Government scheme. "We support the victims of TIDCO houses. Even the 90 per cent completion of the TIDCO house built during 2014-19 was neglected during the previous YSRCP government," he criticised. The infrastructure in the housing colonies is being provided utilizing the Central schemes like MGNREGA, AMRIT and Jal Jeevan mission, he revealed. MLAs Pulivarthi Nani, N Vijayasri, K Ramakrishna, Murali and Housing construction corporation CE GV Prasad were among those who attended the meeting.

ACROSS THE STATES



Bird festival proposed to be held during Kumbh

A two-day bird festival is being planned on February 1-2 during the Kumbh here next year to make people connect with nature at the world's largest religious gathering, an official said on Saturday. A proposal on the event aimed at providing information on the biodiversity of the wildlife sanctuaries in the state, is being sent to the government. Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Arvind Kumar said. Mahakumbh will begin on January 13, 2025 on the occasion of Paush Purnima and end on February 26 on the occasion of Mahashivratri. The bird festival, themed 'Kumbh's faith, conservation of nature and climate', will also help the tourism department in creating a circuit of the forests, historical sites and places of natural beauty in the state, he said.



Clothes alone don't make one Yogi: Akhilesh

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday said a man becomes a "saint" not by what he wears but what he speaks. The dig, apparently aimed at Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, was made on the birthday of 'Khajanchi' - a boy born to a woman standing in a queue to exchange banknotes after demonetisation. The boy was named so by Yadav. "Countdown has started for those who do encounters. Their days in the seat of power are numbered," Yadav said at the programme. Yadav, without naming anyone, said people with cunning tend to become bitter in speech. "You can see that their language has changed, their way of thinking and understanding have also changed," he said. "A person who does not consider anyone to be bigger than him, what kind of a yogi is he? If there is anybody who is setting the seers against each other, it's the people in the government," the former UP chief minister said. "It is said that the greater a saint is, the less he speaks, and when he speaks, it is for public welfare."



Delhi schools to get cybercrime education

The Delhi Directorate of Education has directed the heads of all government and private schools to make children aware of cyber crime through banners and posters. According to a circular issued on Friday, the content is supposed to be supplied by the Delhi police, which has developed a series of brochures, focusing on cybersafety, cyberfraud, cyberbullying, online pornography, drug abuse, bullying, human trafficking, and online predators. "This initiative aims to educate students on preventing cybercrimes and ensuring their safety in the digital world," the DoE said. Schools have also been instructed to collaborate with local police and cybersecurity experts to organise educational sessions. "These sessions will help students understand essential topics such as recognising and reporting cyberbullying, protecting personal information online, the importance of strong passwords and privacy settings, and identifying scams and phishing attempts," the circular read.



Wave in favour of 'Mahayuti' alliance: Modi

PNS ■ NANDED

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday claimed that Congress hates OBCs as it can not come to terms with the fact that a person from Backward Classes is at the helm of the country. Division among Dalits, Adivasis and Backward Classes suits Congress' politics. Still, due to their unity, it is losing its support base, he said, speaking at a campaign rally here for the November 20 Maharashtra assembly elections and Nanded Lok Sabha by-poll.

"It suits the Congress' politics if Dalits, Adivasis and Backward Classes are divided. Its game plan is to divide you into different groups and communities," he said. "Congress hates the OBCs because it cannot digest the fact that an OBC is the prime minister for ten years and working by taking everyone along," Modi said. "They want to divide the OBC communities into small castes and snatch the power of their unity. If it happens, Congress will snatch the reservation," he alleged. Efforts to divide people on caste lines and deprive them of reservation were made by lead-

Says Cong hates OBCs

ers from Jawaharlal Nehru to Rajiv Gandhi, he claimed. He claimed there is a wave in favour of the 'Mahayuti' alliance of BJP, Shiv Sena, and NCP, adding that its goal is 'Viksit Bharat'. "Hence, the BJP and its allies are chosen by the people again and again. Nanded did not vote for us during the Lok Sabha elections. I hope you will bless me now,"

'No right to stay in power' Pawar targets 'Mahayuti'

PNS ■ LATUR

NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Saturday attacked Maharashtra's BJP-led Mahayuti, saying a coalition that has no grasp of agriculture and lacks concerns for the educated unemployed has no right to remain in power. Farmers in the state are being neglected, while key projects are being diverted to Gujarat, he said at a campaign rally for the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in Udgir in Latur district. Pawar's party has fielded Sudhakar Bhalero against Sanjay Bansode of rival NCP,

headed by his politically estranged nephew and Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, for the November 20 assembly elections. The NCP (SP) chief said Maharashtra once led in soybean and cotton production, but local farmers suffered immense losses after the BJP-led Centre started importing soybean derivatives. This policy has broken the backbone of farmers, he said. The export ban on sugar, onions and soybeans is only weakening the agricultural sector in the state, said the former Union agriculture minister.



"The Centre even permitted the import of agro products that could have been sourced locally, further harming Maharashtra's soybean producers. Such farmer-unfriendly policies highlight the government's disregard for farmers. This is why these leaders should not be in power," Pawar said.

India has effective mechanism to monitor oceans: Navy chief



PNS ■ KANNUR (KERALA)

India has a highly effective mechanism for monitoring the oceans, known as maritime domain awareness, and is fully aware of "who is where and who is doing what" to ensure the country's interests are not compromised, Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi has said. The Navy Chief also dismissed the dual carrier operation by China in the South China Sea as "nothing we should be concerned of". Addressing the media after the grand finale of THINQ 2024, a nationwide quiz com-

petition organised by the Indian Navy on Friday evening, Tripathi also said India keeps a "close watch" on activities in its "area of interest". He made these remarks at the Ezhimala Naval Academy here in response to a question on China's growing influence in the region through its cooperation with Sri Lanka. "What China does in any part of the globe, let them do it. What they do in our area of interest, we are keeping a close watch. Nothing happens in our part of the world which we do not know," CNS added.

Navy to display its maritime capabilities in Puri on Dec 4

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy is set to demonstrate its formidable maritime capabilities and operational strength at the Blue Flag Beach of Puri in Odisha on the occasion of Navy Day on December 4, officials said on Saturday. President Droupadi Murmu has consented to be the chief guest for the event, a Navy spokesperson said in a statement.

This event showcases the Navy's multifaceted competencies, enhances maritime awareness among citizens and honours India's rich seafaring heritage. The 2024 'Operational Demonstration' or 'Op Demo' is set to be held against the backdrop of the pristine Blue Flag Beach that symbolises the connection between the Indian Navy and the maritime legacy of the state of Odisha, the statement said.

PM not adhering to unity, 'sabka saath' talk: Digvijaya

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Digvijaya Singh on Saturday alleged atrocities against minorities in BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh and urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to implement his words on unity in society in true letter and spirit. Addressing a press conference here, the former Madhya Pradesh chief minister accused the state authorities of meting out step-motherly treatment and harassing minorities in the state and demanded justice for them. In a letter to Prime Minister Modi, Singh alleged that crimes against a particular community are on the rise and he must act to stop them. He cited several incidents of atrocities and violence against people of the Muslim community in Madhya Pradesh and said the actions of the authorities in BJP-ruled states like Madhya Pradesh are not only dangerous for national unity, but are against the Constitution that grants equal rights to all. "I hope that to maintain communal harmony and national unity, you will imple-



ment the guidelines of the Supreme Court and the Home Ministry in true letter and spirit. "I also hope that you will act to protect the constitutional rights of all people and will sincerely adhere and implement your slogan of 'sabka saath, sabka vikas, sabka vishwas and sabka prayas'," Singh said in his letter. He also wrote the letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and said he hoped that action will be taken, failing which he along with social organisations would protest outside the Madhya Pradesh chief minister's residence and would take to the streets and would even knock the doors of the courts.

"I hope that to maintain communal harmony and national unity, you will implement the guidelines of the Supreme Court and the Home Ministry in true letter and spirit"

PM coaxing investments to home state, alleges K'taka CM

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of showing "relentless favouritism" towards his home state Gujarat. Alleging that major investments are being "coaxed away" from thriving states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, and handed over to Gujarat, the CM demanded fairness and equal opportunity for all southern states. "PM Narendra Modi's relentless favouritism toward Gujarat is clear as day, with major investments - from semiconductor plants to key manufacturing hubs - being coaxed away from thriving states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana, and handed to Gujarat with exclusive subsidies and incentives," Siddaramaiah said in a post on 'X'. Accusing Karnataka BJP MPs of sitting in silence, unwilling to question this blatant disregard for Karnataka's thriving tech and manufacturing ecosystem, he said, "Instead, they allow Modi's 'helicopter diplomacy' to serve Gujarat alone, leaving our state sidelined."

Demonetisation, GST weapons to kill farmers, labourers: Rahul

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday attacked the BJP-led Centre, alleging that its policies on demonetisation and Goods and Services Tax (GST) were weapons to kill farmers, labourers and the poor in the country. He also claimed that a battle is on in India between the ideologies of the BJP-RSS and INDIA bloc, who are believers of hatred and love, respectively. The battle is also between violence and unity, he claimed. "Policies of Narendra Modi are responsible for spreading unemployment in India. Demonetisation, GST are weapons to kill the poor, farmers and labourers," he said while addressing a poll rally in Jamshepur.



FELLING OF TREES FOR RAILWAY OVERBRIDGE

Guwahati residents form human chain

PNS ■ GUWAHATI

Residents of Assam's largest city Guwahati came out on the streets on Saturday to protest purported plans to fell trees in Bharalumukh area of the city for construction of a bridge over a railway track. About 100 people, mostly residents of the area including several senior citizens, formed a human chain along the trees, displaying placards and raising slogans against felling of trees. "These trees have been a hallmark of Bharalumukh area. In our childhood, the water of Bharalu river was also clean, but it is no longer so. If the trees are also cut, there will be no trace of history of the place," a septuagenarian, who participated in the protest sitting on a chair, said.



Echoing her another senior resident who has lived in the area for over 70 years added, "We are not against the bridge or development. But there can surely be ways to ensure that beauty and greenery of this area is not destroyed for the sake of construction." The protest was staged at the call of a citizens coordination committee, expressing concern over locals being reportedly left out from decision-making process regarding a project for construction of a bridge at Railway Gate no 9 (now renamed Gate no 5) in Bharalumukh area.

'Effects of premature birth could persist into adulthood'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Effects of being born prematurely could continue to affect an individual till they turn nearly 30 years of age -- 17 per cent could be less likely to enroll in a university, while 16 per cent less likely to graduate with a university degree, a new study has found. Premature or preterm birth is said to affect about 10 per cent of all births globally and could account for one in every five child deaths. The researchers, including those at The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada, looked at all live births in the country between 1990 and 1996, and followed the children for over two decades. About seven per cent of the births were preterm. Data on 24 lakh individuals was analysed. On an average, people born before 37 weeks of gestation -- preterm infants -- were found to have lower levels of education and earn lower incomes through 28 years of age. The researchers found that the average yearly income of prematurely born individuals at age 18-28 years was six per cent lower compared to those born at term. "Preterm-born individuals, on average, had CAD 958 less employment income per year, 6 per cent lower income per year, than term-born individuals, and were 2.13 per cent less likely to be employed," the authors wrote in the study published in the journal PLoS ONE. "Preterm birth was negatively associated with college or university enrollment (17 per cent less likely to enroll in a university program). Preterm-born individuals were also 16 per cent less likely to graduate with a university degree," they wrote. Further, among those born between 24-27 weeks of gestation, which was "extremely preterm", yearly incomes were found to be 17 per cent lower and university enrollment and graduation rates decreased by 45 per cent, the authors found. "While clinical care during the neonatal period is critical, our findings suggest that the development of long-term supports (including psychological, education and vocational resources) that go beyond clinical care may help mitigate the longer-term effects of preterm birth," said author Petros Pechlivanoglou, The Hospital for Sick Children.



Preterm-born individuals, on average, had CAD 958 less employment income per year, 6 per cent lower income per year, than term-born individuals, and were 2.13 per cent less likely to be employed

Centre earns over Rs 650 cr revenue from scrap disposal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has earned over Rs 650 crore from disposal of scrap during the recently-concluded cleanliness campaign, an official statement issued on Saturday said. The special campaigns conducted by the government from 2021-24 have generated a revenue of Rs 2,364 crore through disposal of scrap, it said. Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said that the special campaign 4.0 was India's largest campaign for institutionalising swachhata and reducing pendency in the government offices and has witnessed many best practices and milestones. Inspired by Prime Minister



Narendra Modi's directions, the saturation approach was adopted in special campaign 4.0 for swachhata and reducing pendency. "Special campaign 4.0 generated revenues of more than Rs 650 crore in the October 2-31, 2024 period," said the

statement issued by the Personnel Ministry. The special campaign 4.0 has seen swachhata campaigns being undertaken in more than 5.97 lakh sites and has resulted in freeing 190 lakh square feet of space for effective office use, it added.



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

At 'RED', Radisson Blu MBD Hotel Noida, the new menu brings the vibrant flavours of authentic Chinese cuisine to life. A perfect mix of traditional and modern dishes, it's a dining experience that's bound to excite your taste buds, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

A TASTE OF CHINA, PAINTED IN RED

Step into 'RED' at Radisson Blu MBD Hotel Noida and you're instantly transported to the heart of China, where every dish tells a story. With a fresh new menu that celebrates authentic Chinese flavours, the restaurant brings together traditional recipes and innovative twists, promising a dining experience unlike any other. Whether you're a vegetarian or a meat lover, the culinary journey here is one that caters to all tastes, with bold flavours and unforgettable textures that will leave you craving more. The ambience of 'RED' is equally remarkable. With its dark, red-lit interior, the space exudes a cosy, intimate vibe, evoking the feel of an authentic Chinese restaurant. As you settle in, you know you're in for something special. Ms. Sonica Malhotra Kandhari, Joint Managing Director of MBD Group, shares, "The RED menu has been meticulously crafted with our guests in mind. This menu reengineering underscores our commitment to authentic Chinese flavours. We look forward to welcoming guests to explore this exciting new offering." At the heart of this dining experience are the sauces, a crucial part of any authentic Chinese meal. 'RED' offers a variety of carefully crafted options, including the classic Chilli Black Bean, the Soya Chilli Coriander and

their signature special sauce made with onion, tomato, chilli and garlic. And for those who enjoy a bit of spice and fermentation, the kimchi adds a delightful punch to any dish. The sauces truly elevate the experience and don't forget to master the art of eating with chopsticks - a fun and authentic way to enjoy the full flavours. Next up, I moved on to the Dim Sum & Bao section. The Truffle Edamame offered a delightful twist on the classic, with a subtle truffle flavour that complemented the beans beautifully, giving them a soft yet earthy taste. However, the Tofu Bao with Chilli Bean Relish turned out to be my absolute favourite. The silken tofu paired with the chilli bean relish was a perfect blend of soft and spicy, all encased in a delicate, fluffy bao bun. This dish encapsulated the balance of textures and flavours that make Chinese cuisine such a treat.

Moving into the Appetisers, the Chilled Mould Tofu with Peanut Sauce was a refreshing change, delicate, smooth tofu dressed in a creamy, slightly tangy peanut sauce. As someone who isn't a big tofu fan, I found it intriguing. It's a dish that might take some getting used to, but the pairing of tofu with peanut sauce certainly creates a unique, palate-expanding experience. This dish left a lasting impression, as did the Mogu with Dry Red Chilli and Sichuan Pepper, a crispy fried button mushroom stir-fry that managed to stay crunchy even as it cooled. This level of attention to texture and flavour is a hallmark of authentic Chinese cooking, blending tradition with a modern twist. The bold, balanced flavours in each appetiser felt like a true celebration of Chinese culinary heritage. Moving on to the main course, the Mapo Tofu was a definite standout. Known for its bold, spicy flavours, the tofu here was incredibly silky, bathed in a slightly fiery sauce that



with exotic vegetables and bamboo shoots, was packed with flavour and left a lasting impression. While 'RED' offers a delightful selection of vegetarian dishes, the restaurant's non-vegetarian options are known to truly shine. As a vegetarian, I haven't tried them personally, but from what I've heard, 'RED' delivers on authentic Chinese non-vegetarian flavours. Crafting exceptional Chinese cuisine in a vegetarian style is no easy feat, but Chef Sachin Malik and his team have truly excelled in creating vegetarian dishes that rival their meat counterparts. From Shandong Style Seafood Soup to Kung Pao Chicken and Braised Lamb, each dish offers a window into authentic Chinese cuisine. Reflecting on the culinary vision, Chef Sachin Malik, Executive Chef, reflects, "We aim to celebrate the vibrant flavours of China. Our new menu is a tribute to this culinary heritage, blending traditional elements with modern techniques, with Chef Ghanshyam Thapa's expertise." The dessert menu is a lovely, light way to end the meal. The Matcha Baked Cheesecake stands out, with its creamy, indulgent dessert with earthy matcha notes that balance the sweetness. It's rich, so sharing it with

someone is a great idea to end the meal on a satisfying note without it feeling too heavy. Beyond the food, the drinks at 'RED' deserve a special mention. The beverages selection is inspired by China's rich cultural heritage, with classics like the Lion's Tail and innovative creations like the Dragon on the Sky and Junshan Island Sundowner. For those preferring non-alcoholic options, the Chinese Tonic, with lychee, star anise and lime juice is refreshingly fragrant. Meanwhile, the Silver Tips, a ginger-infused drink garnished with dragon fruit, is the perfect quencher, ideal for pairing with the rich flavours of RED's menu. 'RED' offers a dining experience that celebrates both authenticity and creativity. The vegetarian options are exceptional, proving that creating perfect Chinese dishes without meat is possible. Chef Sachin Malik and his team have truly outdone themselves, making this a must-visit spot for anyone craving a true taste of China. Whether you're a fan of vegetarian or non-vegetarian dishes, the menu offers something for everyone, ensuring that your journey through Chinese flavours will be a memorable one.

was rich yet balanced. For those who prefer their spice with a subtle twist, the Braised Style Eggplant with Sichuan Pepper Corn was another highlight. The tender eggplant soaked up the flavours of the sauce beautifully, creating a comforting dish with just the right amount of heat. If you're after something more filling, the Red Signature Jasmine Bamboo Fried Rice should be your go-to. This fragrant dish, infused



Cranberry Coffee and Beyond

Through Cranberry Coffee, Roastery Coffee House is redefining how the world experiences Indian coffee, placing India firmly on the global coffee map, writes **GYANESHWAR DAYAL**

In an impressive feat that showcases Indian ingenuity, Roastery Coffee House has become the first Indian brand to invent and trademark a specialty coffee: Cranberry Coffee. This unique drink—a refreshing combination of cranberry juice, sparkling water, and espresso—has not only captivated coffee lovers across India but is also gaining international attention. With its signature Cranberry Coffee now protected by a trademark, Roastery Coffee House is setting new standards in the coffee industry and redefining how the world experiences Indian coffee.

THE RISE OF CRANBERRY COFFEE: A REFRESHING INNOVATION

A playful yet refined twist on traditional coffee, Cranberry Coffee combines the boldness of espresso with the tartness of cranberry juice and a splash of sparkling water, creating a refreshing, versatile drink suitable for any time of the day. In the last six months alone, over 100,000 cups of Cranberry Coffee have been sold across Roastery outlets, making it one of the fastest-selling specialty coffees in India. Its popularity spans all age groups and has even become a staple on many café menus, signalling a growing demand for creative coffee options in India and beyond.

Roastery Coffee House's founder, Nishant Sinha, is thrilled by the response, noting how Cranberry Coffee has quickly become a customer favourite. "It's very heartwarming to see how positively everyone has responded to this beverage," he said. "The success of is undeniable, and almost every



order across our chains includes it. Many coffee brands have drawn inspiration from Roastery's innovative creation, and we are very proud that people have embraced it."

ROASTERY COFFEE HOUSE: PIONEERS OF INDIA'S SPECIALTY COFFEE SCENE

Since opening its doors in 2017, Roastery Coffee House has continuously pushed the boundaries of India's coffee culture. Expanding across six cities, the brand has built a strong reputation for offering diverse, high-quality coffee options paired with mouth-watering snacks and light meals, creating an inclusive space for coffee enthusiasts. The introduction of Cranberry Coffee



Photos: Pankaj Kumar



THE SUCCESS OF CRANBERRY COFFEE IS UNDENIABLE, AND ALMOST EVERY ORDER ACROSS OUR CHAINS INCLUDES IT. MANY COFFEE BRANDS HAVE DRAWN INSPIRATION FROM ROASTERY'S INNOVATIVE CREATION, AND WE ARE VERY PROUD THAT PEOPLE HAVE EMBRACED IT

exemplifies the brand's mission to innovate and cater to the evolving preferences of coffee drinkers while staying rooted in authenticity and quality. Beyond its local success, Roastery Coffee House has recently set its sights on the international stage, opening its first flagship store in Helsinki, Finland. The move reflects Roastery's vision of not only sharing Indian coffee with a global audience but also positioning India as a significant player in the specialty coffee industry. The Cranberry Coffee trademark marks a pivotal milestone, as it is the first Indian-origin coffee to secure a global trademark—a



groundbreaking achievement for an Indian brand in this competitive market.

AN INSPIRING FUTURE FOR INDIAN COFFEE

With Cranberry Coffee, Roastery Coffee House has demonstrated how Indian coffee can resonate

on the global stage by combining local creativity with a deep understanding of customer preferences. This achievement is not just a victory for the brand but for India's coffee industry as a whole, setting a powerful example for other Indian brands and creating opportunities for international recognition.

Roastery Coffee House has truly redefined Indian coffee culture and continues to chart a new course for the industry. As it expands internationally, it carries with it a legacy of innovation, quality, and passion, firmly establishing India's place on the global coffee map.

THE TIMELESS ALLURE OF DELHI BAZAARS

Delhi's bazaars are more than just places to shop, they're vibrant, historical hubs where the city's past and present blend seamlessly, writes KANISHKA SRIVASTAVA



Delhi's bazaars, pulsing with life, colour, and history, are much more than marketplaces. They are a blend of heritage and modernity, places where the past and present meet in a seamless confluence of aromas, sounds, and sights. From the labyrinthine lanes of Chandni Chowk to the bustling avenues of Dilli Haat, Delhi's markets tell stories of centuries gone by and reflect the city's evolving culture. Delhi's bazaars have been central to the city's identity since its days as the capital of empires. Mughal emperor Shah Jahan established Chandni Chowk in the 17th century as a marketplace that would rival any in the world. Its name, meaning "Moonlight Square," was inspired by a water canal that once reflected the moonlight, lending a magical glow to the surroundings. Chandni Chowk became the heart of trade in Mughal India, where merchants from across Asia brought in silk, spices, and jewels, turning the area into a melting pot of cultures.

As the years passed, other bazaars sprang up, each with its own speciality and charm. For instance, Khari Baoli, the spice market, emerged as a go-to for spices and dried fruits, its intense aromas filling the air and adding a signature fragrance to Delhi's streets. Over time, bazaars like Daryaganj, which once hosted booksellers and publishers, and Sarojini Nagar, famous for its affordable fashion, have added layers to Delhi's shopping culture. Every festive season, Delhi transforms into a radiant hub of celebration, where joy, traditions, and community take centre stage. Festivals like Diwali, Navratri and Dussehra infuse the city with vibrant energy, filling its streets with lights, colours, and shoppers in search of the perfect outfits, decorations, and gifts. From historic bazaars rich in tradition to modern malls showcasing top designer brands, festival shopping in Delhi is an experience that beautifully combines heritage and contemporary flair.

CHANDNI CHOWK: WHERE HERITAGE MEETS STYLE

Steeped in history, Chandni Chowk is the ultimate destination for exploring Delhi's cultural roots. With narrow lanes lined with shops, this iconic market offers an impressive selection of traditional wear, including bridal lehengas, sarees, and intricate jewellery. The new Omaxe Chowk adds modern amenities to the shopping experience, blending historic charm with contemporary conveniences. Chandni Chowk is a must-visit for



DOWNTOWN BY MANSAN - SOUTH DELHI'S MODERN SHOPPING DESTINATION

Soon to open, Downtown by Mansan Group brings a new shopping experience to South Delhi, conveniently located near the Sarojini Nagar Metro Station. Spread over 2.18 acres, this modern retail complex combines high-street brands with luxury outlets, offering a blend of shopping and contemporary office spaces. With ample parking and a range of dining options, Downtown is set to become a favourite for festival shoppers seeking convenience and a touch of sophistication.



KHAN MARKET: THE UPSCALE MARKET

One of Delhi's upscale markets, Khan Market presents a more sophisticated experience. Although it originated as a market for refugees from Pakistan after Partition, Khan Market has evolved into a high-end shopping hub, known for designer boutiques, international brands, and posh eateries. Its ambience strikes a balance between global trends and Indian tastes, attracting the city's elite and expatriates.

Delhi's bazaars are not just shopping destinations—they are cultural institutions that hold a mirror to the city's diverse population. During festivals like Diwali and Eid, bazaars take on a life of their own, with streets decked in lights, special offerings at every stall, and an air of celebration all around. Vendors and shoppers, coming from varied cultural and economic backgrounds, interact with warmth and camaraderie, making these spaces truly inclusive.

Besides, the food scene in Delhi's markets is an experience in itself. From Parathe Wali Gali's fried delights to the chaats of INA Market and the kebabs of Jama Masjid, the bazaars have something to tantalise every palate. Street food vendors, often in families for generations, have honed their craft, turning simple snacks into icons of Delhi's culinary landscape.

The Future of Delhi's Bazaars: Balancing Heritage with Modern Needs.

As Delhi modernises, its bazaars are also evolving. The government has initiated efforts to preserve historical markets, restoring facades and improving infrastructure to cater to tourists and preserve heritage. However, challenges persist: rapid urbanisation, increased footfall, and modernisation pressures can sometimes erode the traditional spirit of these markets. Yet, the resilience of Delhi's bazaars lies in their adaptability.

anyone looking to immerse themselves in Delhi's rich heritage during the festive season.

LAJPAT NAGAR: A FESTIVAL SHOPPER'S PARADISE

Known for its affordability and variety, Lajpat Nagar is a favourite among festival shoppers. This lively market offers everything from ethnic wear to home décor and accessories, all at competitive prices. Whether you're after an elegant saree or bridal outfit, Lajpat Nagar's vibrant atmosphere and wallet-friendly options make it a popular spot for families prepping for the festive season.

KAROL BAGH: THE HEART OF TRADITION

Karol Bagh is famous for its mix of traditional and contemporary attire,

making it a top destination for wedding and festival shopping. With stores packed into narrow, bustling streets, shoppers can explore an extensive range of bridal wear, textiles, and unique jewellery. The energetic vibe and variety make Karol Bagh ideal for those seeking traditional attire and festive accessories.

GREATER KAILASH: ELEGANCE IN EVERY CORNER

If you're looking for a more luxurious shopping experience, Greater Kailash is the place to be. Home to designer boutiques and high-end stores, this area is perfect for finding exclusive bridal wear, premium jewellery, and sophisticated trousseau outfits. With its upscale ambience, Greater Kailash attracts festival-goers who want to celebrate in style.



Photo: Ranjan Dimri

A Soulful Sojourn in Puri and Konark

Puri and Konark, two jewels of Odisha, offer a rich tapestry of spirituality, history, and culture that captivates the soul of every traveler, writes VISHESH SHUKLA

In quest of spiritual enlightenment, I embarked on a spiritual journey to Jagannath Puri, the revered abode of Lord Krishna. Boarding a local train from Dhenkanal railway station at dawn, I felt a thrill of excitement for the adventure ahead. The weather was beautiful, with the sun just beginning to rise, casting a warm glow over everything. As the train moved along, I found myself pondering my plans for the day once I reached Puri, eagerly anticipating the experiences that awaited me.

After a few hours of the train's rhythmic motion, I finally arrived at my destination. Upon exiting the station, I immediately started looking for a place to stay. Fortunately, I found Hotel Nemili nearby. I settled on renting 1400 to the hotel reception to get a room. The room was cosy and inviting, a perfect spot to rest after my journey. After resting and freshening up for a while, I felt rejuvenated and ready to explore.

Eager to soak in the local ambience, I grabbed a cup of tea from a nearby stall, enjoying the vibrant atmosphere around me. The streets buzzed with life, filled with locals and tourists alike, all making their way to the temple. Soon, I decided to take a shared auto to the famous Jagannath Temple. The driver charged me Rs. 20 and dropped me a short distance from the temple entrance.



TEMPLE

As I walked along Chakratirtha Road, I noticed a significant crowd gathering, likely due to the weekend and the special occasion of Govardhan Puja. A police officer stationed nearby mentioned that it would take at least three hours to have darshan due to the rush. Many brokers approached me, promising faster entry for a fee of Rs. 500, but I decided not to engage with them and continued on my way, determined to experience the authentic essence of the pilgrimage. The heat was intense, and I felt a bit uneasy, the sun bearing down as I moved through the throngs of people. After a while, I reached the temple's entrance, where I stored my mobile and shoes in the locker provided by the temple trust. I joined the long line for darshan, the anticipation building with

each step. After two hours of waiting and moving through the crowd, I finally had darshan of Lord Jagannath, along with visits to the Sakshi Gopal and Ganesh temples within the premises. The atmosphere was electric with devotion, and I took a moment to soak in the spiritual energy that filled the air. I also made sure to visit the Mahalakshmi Temple before leaving the complex, feeling grateful for the blessings received. As I emerged from the sacred precincts of the Jagannath Temple, I was blessed with a profound spiritual experience witnessing the live installation of the Patitapabana Bana, a revered flag atop the temple's majestic spire. This sacred ritual, steeped in tradition and significance, left an indelible mark on my soul, with a sense of serenity and connection to the divine. By the time I exited the temple, my stomach growled in protest. I walked down Chakratirtha

Road again and stopped at Ram Lalla restaurant, where I enjoyed a satisfying meal. The flavours were delicious, and I found myself reflecting on the incredible experience of the day—the vibrant sights, the sounds of prayers, and the palpable sense of community. To make the evening even better, I set out for Puri's popular Golden Beach, where many people were already present. After sitting there for a while, I felt a deep sense of peace watching the waves crash against the shore. The sight of the ocean calmed my mind, and I enjoyed an ice cream being sold nearby,

savouring the moment. After spending some more time lost in thought and tranquillity, I decided to call it a day and returned to my hotel to rest.

DISCOVERING KONARK

The next morning, I woke up early, checked out of the hotel, and placed my luggage in the locker room near the station. With excitement bubbling within me, I made my way to Vatika Restaurant for breakfast, relishing the local flavours before setting off for Konark. I took a shared auto to reach there, and as soon as I arrived, I was greeted by intense heat, much stronger than in Puri. My first stop was the Sun Temple, an incredible historic site under the Archaeological Survey of India, which required an entry ticket for Rs. 35. Thankfully,

tickets can be easily purchased online, making it convenient for travellers. The temple's architecture was mesmerising, a true marvel of ancient Indian craftsmanship. I spent some time exploring the intricacies of the carvings and the grandeur of the structure, feeling a sense of reverence as I walked through the sacred grounds.

After immersing myself in the history of the Sun Temple, I continued to Chandrabhaga Beach, just 4 kilometres away. The beach is very popular among tourists and offers fun activities like ATV bike rides and boat rides. I spent a while enjoying the beach, feeling the soft sand beneath my feet and the refreshing sea breeze against my skin. The vibrant energy of the beach was infectious, and I could see families enjoying picnics, children building sandcastles, and friends laughing together.

As the day went on, I checked the time and decided it was best to head back. I knew I had to catch the 5 PM local train back to Dhenkanal. Returning to Puri, I caught the train and settled in, watching the scenery change outside the window. I reached home with a heart full of cherished memories and stunning sights that stayed vividly in my mind, knowing that this journey had deepened my connection to my spirituality and left me yearning for more adventures in the future.

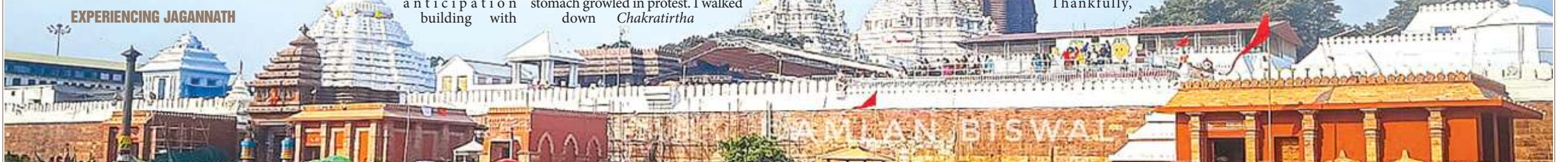


PHOTO: ANILAN BISWAL

IN BRIEF



Action Construction Equipment PAT grows to Rs 95 cr

Action Construction Equipment Ltd has reported a 28 per cent rise in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 94.82 crore for September quarter, on account of higher income. It had posted a PAT of Rs 73.94 crore for the quarter ended September 2023, the company said in an exchange filing on Friday. Income increased to Rs 790.90 crore from Rs 690.21 crore in the year-ago quarter. For the April-September period, the company reported a PAT of Rs 179 crore, higher from Rs 141.51 crore in the corresponding six-month period of FY24. "In the quarter gone by, we have reinforced our liquidity position, improved working capital efficiency and further fortified our balance sheet which gives us the flexibility to seize growth opportunities in the future," Executive Director Sorab Agarwal said in a statement.



Rs 500 cr scheme to support medtech industry

The government on Friday launched a scheme with an outlay of Rs 500 crore for strengthening critical areas of the medical device industry. The scheme covers the manufacturing of key components and accessories, skill development, support for clinical studies, development of common infrastructure, and industry promotion. Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers JP Nadda said the scheme is going to be a game changer and it will not only help the industry but will also be a long leap in making India self-reliant. He noted the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a government of action and the PLI scheme itself is something which has opened new paths. Nadda appealed to the medical device industry to make good use of the scheme and assured the industry that the Department of Pharmaceuticals will provide all support.



Tripura to start rationing petrol from today

Tripura Food and Civil Supplies minister Sushanta Chowdhury on Saturday said the government would start rationing petrol from November 10 as supply of fuel to the state has been affected due to derailment of railway track between Lumding and Badarpur section of NFR. The minister said two-wheeler owners will get petrol worth Rs 200 petrol per day from Sunday, while three-wheelers will get Rs 400 worth of petrol and four-wheelers Rs 1000 worth of petrol per day. "Due to derailment of track between Lumding and Badar, there has been a steep reduction in the state's fuel stock. Therefore, the state will impose restriction on selling of fuel especially petrol from Sunday," he said in a Facebook post. Around 5 km of railway track was affected due to the derailment of a fuel tanker between Lumding and Badarpur section on October 31 which has impacted normal fuel supply to Tripura.

Trump's presidency may benefit India: Moody's

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Donald Trump's presidency may see trade and investment flows diverting away from China as the US tightens investments in strategic sectors but this shift might benefit India and ASEAN countries, Moody's Ratings said.

The November 5 election of Trump as the next US President will likely materially shift its policies from those of the current Joe Biden administration. In a second Trump administration, Moody's expects large fiscal deficits, protectionist trade actions, climate-measure rollbacks, a stricter stance on immigration, and easing regulations.

Trump is likely to pursue more aggressive immigration policies, including increased deportations, the construction of additional border barriers, stricter visa regulations, and reduced asylum grants.



About Trump's foreign policy, Moody's said in the Asia-Pacific region, trade and investment flows might be further diverted away from China as the US tightens investments in strategic sectors, which would negatively affect China's economy and consequently dampen regional growth. "However, this shift might benefit India and ASEAN countries. Continued US-China

polarisation also risks exacerbating geopolitical divisions in the region, increasing risks of disruption to the global supply of semiconductors," it added.

In Europe, the reduced US support for Ukraine might increase European governments' fiscal burdens as governments initially try to compensate for the US support, Moody's said.

"US disengagement from NATO would also increase security risks in Europe by emboldening Russia, putting countries along NATO's eastern border at greatest risk. Also, the proposed blanket tariffs and US-China tensions will likely hurt trading partners in the region, but could indirectly benefit Europe by making it a more attractive investment destination because of its relative policy stability," the US-based rating agency said in its report released late evening.

Indian airspace is getting more users; need to adopt new tech

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Emphasising the need for ways to further streamline air traffic movements in the Indian airspace, Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlungmang Vualnam on Saturday suggested that air traffic controllers should look at the use of new technologies such as generative artificial intelligence.

He was speaking at the 40th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting (APRM) of the International Federation of Air Traffic Controllers' Associations (IFATCA), hosted by the Air Traffic Controllers' Guild (India), in the national capital.

The three-day meeting, with the theme 'Safety in Future Air Traffic Management', began on Saturday.

The participants will discuss cutting-edge technologies,

innovative strategies, and sustainable practices that will shape the safety in future air traffic management, according to the meeting's website.

Vualnam said airspace is getting crowded. "Airspace is getting more and more users".

While mentioning about new technologies such as Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI), he emphasised that "instead of ignoring and closing our eyes, we should collaborate".

He also suggested that ways should be looked on how to streamline air traffic management.

Joint Director General at the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Maneesh Kumar said that growth with safety is being ensured and also stressed the importance of human resources in the aviation space.

AI Express plans more international flights

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expanding its network and tapping group synergies, Air India Express will focus on connecting smaller cities and towns with metros as well as fly to new overseas destinations, according to senior officials.

The airline, which recently completed the merger of AIX Connect with itself, has a fleet of around 90 aircraft and the count is expected to cross 110 by the end of this fiscal. It also aims to fly to a total of 55 destinations by the end of March 2025 and has also rationalised its network as part of Air India Group strategy. Apart from adding domestic routes, the Tata

Group-owned airline will start flights to more foreign destinations, including Bangkok and Phuket in Thailand, the officials said.

Air India Express Managing Director Alok Singh said the airline will focus on Tier 2 and 3 cities and towns as they are the growth engines, and the largest chunk of the market is metro to non-metro.

"On the regional short haul international network, it will be primarily from Tier 2, 3 cities to points in the Gulf, Middle East, South East Asia and going forward, South Asia. Perhaps, Far East in a couple of years," Singh said at a select media interaction on Friday.



CCI probe finds Zomato, Swiggy violating competition norms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Competition Commission probe has found that food delivery platforms Zomato and Swiggy indulged in unfair business practices, including alleged preferential treatment to some restaurant partners, according to sources.

The detailed investigation was ordered by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) in April 2022 and the probe report was submitted to the regulator earlier this year.

Under the norms, CCI Director General's report has been shared with the parties concerned and later, they will be called for hearings by the watchdog. After gathering all the views and explanations, the regulator will pass the final order.

The decision to probe the two entities had come on a complaint filed by the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI).

The sources said the probe has found that the two entities indulged in anti-competitive practices, including allegedly extending preferential treatment to some restaurant partners. The report was submitted to the regulator earlier this year, they added.

Query sent on e mail to Swiggy remained unanswered while Zomato declined to comment.

NRAI said it has reviewed the redacted



investigation report that was sent to it in March 2024.

"In order to properly protect the interests of the market, we have petitioned the High Court very recently in November 2024 to request CCI to grant us access to the report in its entirety," the association said in a statement. NRAI President Sagar Daryani hoped that CCI will also speed up the investigation on the other issues raised by the NRAI in its petition in 2022. Last month, Swiggy mentioned about the CCI case in the Red Herring Prospectus for its Initial Public Offering. The IPO closed on Friday.

While ordering the investigation in April 2022, CCI had said that "prima facie there exists a conflict of interest situation,

warranting a detailed scrutiny into its impact on the overall competition between the RPs vis-à-vis the private brands/entities which the platforms may be incentivised to favour".

As per the April 2022 order, preferential treatment accorded to the Restaurant Partners (RPs) in which these platforms have an equity or revenue interest can create barriers for the existing RPs to compete on fair terms. "Such preferential treatment can be through various ways given the platform's control over different aspects that influence competition on them, including control over deliveries, search ranking, etc. which can only be examined appropriately in an investigation," it had said.

Coal ministry 'optimistic' about achieving production target

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday expressed optimism that it will achieve the production target of more than 170 million tonnes from captive and commercial coal blocks in the ongoing fiscal year.

The production from captive, commercial mines from April 1 to November rose 33 per cent to 100.08 MT over 75.05 MT in the year-ago period, the coal ministry said in a statement. The total dispatch from captive, commercial coal mines during the period rose to 107.81 MT from 80.23 MT, it said. "The coal ministry is optimistic about reaching a production target of more than 170 million tonnes from captive and commercial coal blocks in 2024-25," the statement said.

Ashok Leyland expects to record in exports: Hinduja

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Hinduja Group flagship company Ashok Leyland has drawn up plans to expand its business in the South East Asian markets as it pegs to post record business in international operations during this financial year.

The company has lined up plans to enter four different markets in South East Asia this year and has already forayed into the Philippines, with plans to enter Malaysia as well, company Managing Director and CEO Shenu Agarwal said.

"Our next target in terms of geographical expansion is South East Asia. We have been talking about it for long. We want to get into four different markets in South East Asia. Philippines we have already started retailing there. In Malaysia, we were very close to



launching some vehicles but due to some regulatory changes at a short notice, we are working on them (to launch their products)," he told reporters here.

Ashok Leyland Executive Chairman Dheeraj Hinduja said despite Bangladesh going through a slight economic crisis, Middle Eastern markets are doing very well at the moment. "We expanded our range of products (in Middle Eastern

markets) and that is why as a result we believe we should be in a position to record one of the best years when it comes to international operations," Hinduja said.

Responding to a query, Agarwal said that GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) market has been a 'star performer' for Ashok Leyland and added that the company's products have been well accepted in those regions.

UP govt holds talks with World Bank on Rs 3,903-cr project

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government, the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and the World Bank on Friday held negotiations for the Rs 3,903 crore Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Growth and Rural Enterprise Ecosystem Strengthening project.

The negotiations were held in New Delhi with Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh representing the state government, according to a statement here.

The six-year project aims to revitalise the state's agriculture and allied sectors, enhance productivity and link small-holder farmers to high-value commodity clusters.

Singh outlined the project's pivotal role in advancing the state's vision to achieve a trillion-dollar economy by 2030, it said.

He highlighted that the project will support high-value crop clusters and establish a stronger fisheries ecosystem, with particular focus on the state's eastern and Bundelkhand regions, it added.

The project will also create a digital agriculture platform to provide real-time insights to farmers, helping optimise resources, increase resilience, and boost productivity.

"I am convinced that the farmers of Uttar Pradesh can achieve great things if they are given exposure to the best national and international practices," the chief secretary said.

The project's key components under discussion include climate-resilient productivity enhancement, development of value-added commodity clusters, and strengthening the state's digital and financial ecosystems.

By mid-2025, Uttar Pradesh's Jewar airport is expected to become operational, providing further export avenues for local produce, according to the statement.

World Bank's Country Director for India, Auguste Tano Kouamé, voiced strong support for the initiative, underscoring the institution's commitment to assist Uttar Pradesh in implementing this transformative project, it said.



Goa's marigold cultivators reap benefits of govt's subsidy

PNS ■ PANAJI

The Goa government's subsidy for marigold farmers is proving to be a boon for cultivators and has reduced the state's dependency on neighbouring Karnataka and Maharashtra, an official said on Saturday.

Talking to PTI, Goa Director of Agriculture Sandeep Phal Desai schemes from the Union and state governments have encouraged farmers to cover more area under marigold plantation.

Marigolds are in demand in the coastal state during festivals such as Dussehra, Diwali and Padwa, and the dependency on other states has reduced significantly over the last couple of

years. This year, 400-odd farmers have produced 180 tonnes of marigold, covering an area of 30 hectares.

Phal Desai said 15 hectares came under marigold cultivation in 2022, and it increased to 25 hectares in 2023 and is at 30 hectares this year.

Farmers receive Rs 75,000 per hectare as subsidy, which includes Rs 16,000 under the National Horticulture Mission and Rs 59,000 under the state government's scheme for promoting the cultivation of flowers, the official said.

He said farmers from Bardez, Sattari, Sanguem, Canacona and Quepem have been cultivating marigolds as it



yields instant money. The state government has allocated Rs 90 lakh for the current fiscal for the Cultivation of

Flowers scheme, he said. Phal Desai said self-help groups prepare seeds under the state government's ATMA

(Agriculture Technology Management Agency) scheme. The state government's initiative under the guidance of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has many success stories.

Sandeep Parab, a former government employee, resigned from service to take up marigold farming full time.

Parab, a resident of Sattari, North Goa, has been producing 10 tonnes of marigolds annually. "Instead of vying for government jobs, youngsters should take up agriculture, as it is more lucrative," he said, adding that the state agriculture department has always encouraged new farmers.

Gasper Fernandes from Anjuna in North Goa said he had started cultivating marigolds on a small scale, but his operation has grown and is helping him financially.

The man behind Comic Con India's magic!



SHIKHA DUGGAL
shikhaduggalwork@gmail.com

Come to Hyderabad in 2024 for Comic Con India, the ultimate pop culture extravaganza! This year's event is expected to be the largest and greatest ever, with world-class cosplayers, A-list celebrities and interactive activities. Hyderabad will be the site of the three-day event, which promises fans an unmatched geeky weekend. But what if we told you that we had an exclusive interview with Comic Con India's founder? He told us everything about how to immerse yourself in a kaleidoscope of colours, characters and creativity as our city prepares to host the ultimate pop culture festival. Prepare yourself to traverse a realm where epic characters come to life, fantastic universes emerge and superheroes soar. Fandom has no boundaries in this dynamic field and the excitement is evident. You will be left speechless and wanting more after experiencing our voyage of cosplay, comics, gaming and entertainment all in one place.

"The original motivation to pursue it as a side project had a pretty narrow goal. Given the first show's and the later editions' popularity, it was obvious that we had found something and needed to take it in the correct path." Jatin Verma explains how comics are truly fuelling an entire community for the love of cosplayers, saying, "Over the years, we kept evolving and that evolution got us to where we are now." The Indian pop-culture market as a whole was also matur-

ing. He goes on, "The whole post-pandemic trend of retribution outings has turned into a broader quest for meaningful experiences! If fans believe they are receiving something special, they are prepared to spend more. Fans are eager to spend more to see their favourite concerts, as evidenced by the rise in concert prices. I observe more committed spectators who want to invest time and funds in engaging activities."

Popular Indian and foreign artists will be featured at this year's Hyderabad Comic Con, entertaining and engrossing us with their perspectives on pop culture and comics. "I believe the live events sector is growing because Indian viewers are aware of global events and want to experience something similar here in India as well. The demand for top-notch events is enormous and has not yet been completely satisfied. I anticipate that this increase will continue in the foreseeable future, which is one of the reasons Comic Con India is growing into new locations. Like our counterparts throughout the world, we have supported—and in some cases, started—a number of fan communities in India, whether they be cosplay, comics, collectibles, etc. But we've also served as a forum for fans to find new content; they come to us to find new things. We regard ourselves as having a significant impact on Indian pop culture."

Fans assemble to meet these creators and artists at the comic book convention, which is a fan conference that emphasises comic book culture. "As a

fan discovery platform, we have played a crucial role in introducing a wide variety of new content to audiences in India, whether it be via comics, animation, or live action entertainment," the founder further explains. "In addition, we have contributed to the development of communities for a number of Indian fandoms. Making the decision to convert a free performance into a ticketed event was one such crucial moment! This was necessary for us to maintain our financial stability and keep up with the rising expenses. We took this risk in 2014; it took us several rounds of deliberation to settle on a price, but in spite of our initial anxiety, the event sold out. Another such difficulty was the pandemic, which prevented us from conducting business as usual. During those two years, we made the most of our online presence to remain current and maintain relationships with our followers. Additionally, returning from the pandemic presented a special set of difficulties, but they were a good problem to have because they allowed us to accommodate big crowds despite the limitations of our facilities."

Therefore, there were particular difficulties in creating a community-based event like Comic Con India and growing it into a national phenomenon. Numerous such turning points required him to reconsider his strategy in order to account for Comic Con's expansion. He said, for instance, "As I indicated, in some instances we have contributed to the cre-

ation of such communities, case in point—cosplay. In 2011, the first-ever group of cosplayers attended our first event. Additionally, many of them were family members and acquaintances. We had around 3000 cosplayers at each of our events on average during our final season of activities. Over the years, we have contributed to the creation, upkeep and development of this community. With the Indian Championship of Cosplay, we also established the country's first professional cosplayers' platform. It made it possible for a large number of gifted Indian cosplayers to exhibit their work abroad. Our nation is now home to some of the greatest in the world. Of the many accomplishments we have made, this is by far the most proud."

Comic Con India has grown to be an important venue for creators, artists and cosplayers in addition to fans. "I can share the example of artist and creator Rahul Mohsin," the founder says, highlighting noteworthy instances of creators who used the event to establish or grow their careers. "He made his artistic debut at one of our events in our early years as an artist for another publication. He



expanded his collection of work over the years by self-publishing and cooperating with other publishers. Additionally, he debuted his own original series, *Hallu Bol*, during one of our events in 2022. At the majority of events, he is a part of our creator's section and I am constantly curious to see what he will create next. The risk of "selling out" or alienating the core audience then arises as live events grow increasingly commercial. Indeed, this is a problem and we have encountered it with fans as well, particularly as our events have grown in size. Additionally, it is a highly subjective matter; therefore, as we continued to expand, we made sure that the quality of the fan experience also improved and continuously invested in the show's content to provide value for all audience segments."

Comic Con India serves as a fan discovery platform and has been instrumental in bringing a diverse range of new content, including live-action, animated and comic book entertainment, to Indian consumers. In addition, we have contributed to the development of communities for a number of Indian fandoms. A lot of the content mix at their events is driven by their content partners, who include creators, publishers and studios. Curating the event entails a number of different aspects. In order to better understand their viewers' tastes and curate content for them, they also continuously research and poll their audiences. Observing the fans engage with one another and form new friendships and groups is the most fulfilling aspect. The atmosphere and sense of community that one experiences at a Comic Con is perhaps its best feature. The founder himself has made new acquaintances as a result of the event; in fact, he met his wife at Comic Con and presto!



Comic Con India, the premier pop culture event that has taken India by storm, is gearing up for an unforgettable experience in Hyderabad in 2024. In an exclusive interview, Jatin Verma, the founder, shares his journey and insights on how Comic Con India has become a catalyst for pop culture, offering fans not just an event but an immersive and evolving community that continues to grow and thrive year after year

BEATS AND KIM KARDASHIAN REUNITE!

Beats announced a new collaboration with mogul Kim Kardashian for the iconic Beats Studio Pro and the all-new Beats Pill. It is a visual expression of creativity and identity wrapped around a premium sound. The new collaboration reimagines its flagship over-ear product in three neutral colours inspired by Kardashian's signature palette: Moon (light), Dune (medium) and Earth (deep) and the iconic Beats Pill in two gorgeous hues: Light Gray and Dark Gray. The sleek designs create an elevated listening experience with function and style in mind.



WHAT'S NEW

ELEVATING SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Terra Luna's newest collection, a celebration of sustainable fashion and versatile, elevated basics that redefine the modern wardrobe. Crafted predominantly from khadi, each piece reflects eco-conscious fashion and Indian craftsmanship, with a fresh approach to making khadi both stylish and timeless.



TRIBUTE TO COFFEE HERITAGE

Starbucks Reserve® has announced the launch of its single-origin coffee, Monsooned Malabar, in India. This exceptional Arabica blend hails from the Malabar coast and embodies the rich traditions of Southern India's coffee culture, shaped by coastal winds and monsoon rains. Crafted as a tribute to the artistry and dedication of Indian coffee farmers, it offers a unique flavour profile featuring earthy sweetness, chocolate, dried spices and a satisfying malty finish.

SHRYOAN PRETTY ME! LIQUID MATTE LIPSTICKS & LIP GLOSS

For a flawless pout, the Pretty Me! Collection offers two matte liquid lipsticks and one glossy shade in a single set. These waterproof, smudge-proof and transfer-proof lip colors deliver intense, long-lasting pigmentation—ideal for achieving that bold lip.



Price: INR 575

WINTER ESSENTIAL RANGE OF BODY BUTTERS

Inspired by India's Ayurvedic heritage, Dusky India's journey has been fuelled by a desire to make Ayurveda accessible to everyone. Enriched with India's favourite Almond oil, known for its healing and hydrating properties, this butter comes with the goodness of rose extracts, jojoba oil; aloe vera extracts and rose oil. Almonds are rich in natural oils, which help moisturise the skin with deep and long lasting hydration. Rose helps tighten and tone the skin and reduces the appearance of pores. It has a cooling effect on the skin and its aroma has a calming effect on the mind. It helps calm inflammation and soothing irritated or sensitive skin. Regular use of this body butter helps in improving skin complexion, reducing appearance of scars, blemishes and provides a natural glow to the skin.

ULTIMATE WINTER FASHION REVOLUTION

Overlays, is delighted to announce the release of its highly anticipated winter collection "Ember: Steel Winter '24." This creative collection emphasizes the raw power of fire & strength and is ideal for those who value both warmth and resilience during the cold months. Inspired by the elements of fire, the collection is more than just winter fashion—it's a mindset.



WHERE TIMELESS HERITAGE MEETS POP OF GREEN

Unera, with a focus on quality and design, introduces its newest piece, the Peridot Vertical Single Bar Pendant. This pendant combines heritage inspired design with a modern aesthetic, showcasing the vibrant green of Peridot—a gemstone valued for its refreshing, natural tone. Each gemstone is carefully chosen for its quality and sparkle, making this piece both simple and striking.

SHINE ON YOUR BIG DAY WITH BRIDAL MAKEUP MUST HAVES

The wedding season is here and every bride deserves a flawless, breathtaking look on her big day! Achieve perfection with ABH's magic touch concealer and luminous foundation for a radiant, long-lasting base. Elevate your eyes with the enchanting fall romance palette, bringing depth and allure to every gaze. With its essentials, you're set to captivate and create unforgettable memories, looking your absolute best in every cherished moment! A bridal must-have, featuring 12 jewel-toned metallics and rich neutrals in a full-pigment formula. With shades that blend effortlessly, it offers high color payoff—from soft romantic tones to bold pigments—perfect for creating timeless or dramatic looks that shine in every wedding moment.

Price - INR 6400



HOROSCOPE



ARIES

You seek excitement but will struggle to find harmony. Face challenges calmly, balance emotions, and communicate with loved ones. Show confidence and rely on optimism for growth.



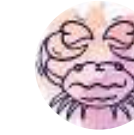
TAURUS

You'll balance joy and stress, navigating others' expectations and criticism. Embrace independence, stay calm in challenges and find solace in family connections and personal growth.



GEMINI

Amid stress and doubts, stay calm, rely on patience, and avoid suspicion. Embrace fatherly guidance, prioritize self-care, and work on financial goals while remaining cautious with travel.



CANCER

Balance confidence with patience, especially with family. Embrace new challenges and communicate openly. Manage emotions to avoid stress and stay true to your ethics.



LEO

Your charm attracts others, but open communication is needed. Stay cautious in ventures and embrace new ideas thoughtfully. Favorable outcomes await, along with emotional stability.



VRIGO

Focus on moneymaking but avoid stifling creativity. Favourable projects await, and a stimulating partner will enhance joy. Stay optimistic and balance analysis to maintain relationships.



LIBRA

Open communication is a must to prevent misunderstandings. Embrace challenges confidently, trust your ethics, and focus on self-care. Maintain harmony through thoughtful interactions.



SCORPIO

Stay calm in challenges, communicate openly, and avoid emotional blowups. Women have a favourable week. Embrace self-control, and mindful planning, and find joy in new love.



SAGITTARIUS

Maintain patience in relationships, stay calm under pressure, and avoid self-pity. Your humour and commitment earn respect. Stay optimistic and resilient to handle challenges effectively.



CAPRICORN

Stay calm in challenges, balance family time with work and show kindness. Embrace optimism and new opportunities; your supportive nature and resilience will bring you recognition.



AQUARIUS

Your supportive nature brings positivity to loved ones. Stay calm under pressure, define goals and embrace new opportunities. Expect relief from long-standing ailments.



PISCES

Your charm and generosity shine this week. Embrace calmness in challenges, prioritize family time, and nurture relationships. There will be a desire for rejuvenation and self-care.

"My family put a lot of emphasis on homework, so there weren't too many comic books or video games for me, when I was growing up"
— Wentworth Miller



With a resurgence fueled by events like Comic Con India and the upcoming Comic Creator Championship, Indian comics are making a powerful comeback, writes SUPRIYA GHAYTADAK



A COMIC JOURNEY FROM NOSTALGIA TO A BRIGHT NEW FUTURE

Growing up, comics were an integral part of my life. My brother and I would save every bit of our pocket money just to buy our favourite comics. Whether it was *Champak*, *Amar Chitra Katha*, *Super Commando Dhruv*, *Nagraj* or *Chacha Chaudhary* stories fueled our imagination and became a key part of our reading journey. Whenever someone asked what we wanted for our birthdays, the answer was always the same—comics! Those colourful pages, filled with heroes and adventures, were more than just entertainment; they were treasured gifts that we eagerly awaited and cherished. There was a time when streetside stalls, bookstores, bus stands, and railway stations buzzed with the vibrant display of comic books. The chatter of children and adults alike, poring over pages that transported them to fantastical worlds, was a common scene. Comics like *Amar Chitra Katha*'s mythological tales, *Chacha Chaudhary*'s wit, or *Raj Comics*' heroic sagas, invoked a sense of wonder and excitement. For many of us, these stories were more than just a form of entertainment; they were an integral part of our childhood—a gateway to imagination and learning. As years passed, digital platforms gradually replaced the physical charm of these marvels. Yet, in this fast-paced world, the nostalgia for these stories remains strong. Many long for the days when characters like *Bahadur*, *Super Commando Dhruv*, *Parmanu*, *Tenali Raman*, *Suppandi*, and *Shikari Shambu* lived not just in our imagination but in the comic strips that shaped our understanding of bravery, wit, and justice. For older generations, these comics represent a simpler time, filled with cultural knowledge and entertainment. For the younger generation, revisiting them now holds the potential to rediscover India's rich folklore and mythologies while connecting with modern interpretations of these beloved characters. The Indian comic industry, once a booming sector from the 1970s to the 1990s, produced iconic characters and stories that captured the hearts of millions. The 'Golden Age' of Indian comics brought us legendary creators



SUPRIYA GHAYTADAK

“THE INDIAN COMIC INDUSTRY, ONCE A BOOMING SECTOR FROM THE 1970S TO THE 1990S, PRODUCED ICONIC CHARACTERS AND STORIES THAT CAPTURED THE HEARTS OF MILLIONS. THE 'GOLDEN AGE' OF INDIAN COMICS BROUGHT US LEGENDARY CREATORS LIKE PRAN, WHOSE CHACHA CHAUDHARY BECAME A HOUSEHOLD NAME, AND THE RISE OF SUPERHERO GIANTS FROM RAJ COMICS.

household name, and the rise of superhero giants from *Raj Comics*. It was an era when *Indian superheroes*, mythological epics, and social commentary blended seamlessly, creating relatable content that resonated with generations. However, at the turn of the millennium, the industry witnessed a decline. Changing reading habits, the rise of television, and the flood of digital content pushed these comics to the background. Yet, despite this downturn, the comic book medium is quietly experiencing a resurgence, aided by digital platforms and a renewed interest in India's rich storytelling tradition. The resurgence of Indian comics is further boosted by the growing



popularity of *Comic Con* events across India. These conventions unite fans, creators, and industry experts, celebrating iconic Indian characters while introducing international comics and pop culture trends. Through cosplay, artist meet-and-greets, and panel discussions, these events keep the love for comics alive, connecting younger generations to India's comic legacy while embracing global influences. In a landmark move, the *Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (I&B)*, Government of India has partnered with the *Indian Comics Association (ICA)* to spearhead the first-ever *Comic Creator Championship (CCC)*, a centrepiece event at the upcoming *World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES)*. This three-phase comic-making competition is designed to nurture emerging talent and showcase India's creative potential on a global stage. By providing a platform for both amateur and professional creators, the CCC encourages fresh voices to engage in storytelling that tackles contemporary issues while

preserving India's timeless narrative traditions. Interested creators can find more details and register on the website of WAVES. Comics remain one of the most accessible mediums to convey stories—whether educating the youth about history, addressing social issues, or providing pure escapism through fantasy. With initiatives like the CCC, Indian comics are poised for a modern golden age, where tradition meets innovation. Now, more than ever is the time to reignite our love for comics. These aren't just stories from the past; they symbolise an ongoing dialogue between India's cultural heritage and the present. Comics have the power to inspire new generations, offer solace, and spark the imagination. As digital platforms democratize access to these narratives, an entire world of possibilities opens up for creators and readers alike. As we look to the future, let us celebrate this revival by participating in the *World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES)*, to be held in New Delhi from February 5th to 9th, 2025. This summit promises to be a landmark event, uniting industry experts, creators, and fans. It will also host the final round of the *Comics Creator Championship*, where India's brightest new talents will be showcased. Together, we can ensure that the stories of the past continue to inspire, innovate, and captivate audiences in the future. India's comic industry stands on the threshold of a renaissance, and all are invited to be a part of it. Now is the time to turn the page and start a new chapter in the vibrant world of Indian comics. Let's revive and elevate Indian comics to their rightful place in popular culture. Will you join this journey?

(The writer is an Indian Information Service officer, Ministry of I&B; views are personal)



TRENDING

DONALD TRUMP



PERSON

Trump has received the number of votes needed to become the 47th president of the United States.

TEENAGER IN HYD LIT FIRECRACKER IN MOUTH OF STATUE OF GANDHI



VIDEO

A young guy was spotted placing a firecracker inside the mouth of a Mahatma Gandhi statue in Telangana in a video that has gone popular on social media.

BABY JOHN



MOVIE

Excitement has been heightened by the action-packed teaser and captivating plot, which have amassed an incredible 157.1 million views in a single day.

HEY MINNALE



SONG

The producers of the upcoming Sivakarthikeyan movie *Amaran* released the first track, *Hey Minnale*. The song, which has vocals by Haricharan and Shweta Mohan, was previously hinted to by music composer GV Prakash.

CHHATH PUJA CELEBRATED WITH POMP



PICTURE

On Friday, November 8, 2024, the final day of Chhath Puja, devotees around Bihar offered morning prayers to the rising sun. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and a number of other prominent figures joined in the celebrations.

Amaal Malik's classical reboot with *Ami Je Tomar 3.0*

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Amaal Malik is a musical force who has crafted anthems and heart-wrenching ballads that speak to multiple generations, seamlessly blending contemporary and classic sounds. Since bursting onto the Bollywood music scene, Amaal has built an impressive catalog of tracks that capture both the youthful energy of today and the emotional depth of timeless melodies. His ability to mix electronic elements with live instrumentation, seen in hits like *Sooraj Dooba Hai* and *Kar Gayi Chull*, has made him a household name.

However, his talents go beyond just upbeat tracks—his soulful compositions like *Main Rahoon Ya Na Rahoon* demonstrate his versatility in striking emotional chords. Amaal's musical journey began at a young age, assisting industry legends and then stepping into the limelight as a solo composer with *Jai Ho* in 2014.

His track record speaks volumes: whether it's an adrenaline-pumping anthem or a reflective melody, he knows how to craft songs that resonate with listeners across ages. His work isn't just about catchy tunes; it's about creating music that evokes real feelings. He has a knack for blending old-school musical influences with modern sounds, making each song feel both fresh and nostalgic. With every composition, he doesn't just create music—he crafts the soundtrack to our lives, proving that a good melody can transcend time and trends.

The dynamic composer who's been behind some of Bollywood's most infectious dance anthems and heart-melting ballads has taken his music career to a whole new level with his latest track, *Ami Je Tomar*, for *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. Known for creating hits that blend modern sensibilities with a nostalgic touch, Amaal is now venturing into a space he's never explored before—Indian classical music. In this candid chat, Amaal reflects on how *Ami Je Tomar* marks a turning point in his career, not just as a composer but as an artist who is constantly evolving.

For him, working on *Ami Je Tomar 3.0* was a monumental challenge. "This is a huge deal for me," he admits, excited yet reflective. "People always see me as the 'contemporary guy,' but I wanted to show that I can work with something much more rooted. It's a chance for me to showcase another side of my musical identity." His vision for this track was to honour its classical roots while still making it his own—a balancing act that he has always strived for in his decade-long career.

What's even more fascinating is how fate played a part in Amaal's involvement with this iconic song. He reveals that during the making of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, he casually played around with the melody of *Ami Je Tomar*, just as an experiment. "One evening, I wondered, 'What if I were to reimagine this song?' It was more of a 'what if' than a serious attempt," Amaal laughs. He never expected it to go anywhere, but when Preet Amda, the original composer, had to step aside due to prior commitments, Amaal found himself entrusted with the song—a serendipitous moment that turned into a musical milestone.

The responsibility of reinterpreting a Bollywood classic for *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3* was no small feat, especially with the likes of Vidya Balan and Madhuri Dixit bringing their powerhouse performances to the screen. He explains, "The song is integral to the story—it's not just background music. It plays during key emotional moments, including a high-stakes dance-off and the climactic sequence. With such powerful actresses leading the scene, I knew I had to get it just right." His nine-month creative journey to breathe new life into *Ami Je Tomar 3.0* shows

just how seriously he took this responsibility. "I don't often recreate songs, but when I do, I make sure to respect the original. I added a new stanza, but the soul of the song is untouched," Amaal says, proud of his delicate balance between staying true to the original and infusing his own signature style.

What makes this version of *Ami Je Tomar* stand out is not just its classical elements but its timeless appeal. He has an uncanny ability to marry the old with the new, and it's a skill he's perfected over the years. "I'm lucky to be an 'old soul,'" he laughs, referencing his deep connection to melody and meaningful lyrics. His approach to music is one of continuity—preserving the magic of timeless classics while adapting them for modern ears. This duality is at the heart of his philosophy: melody and lyrics come first, always. "The goal is to create something that lasts," Amaal asserts. "Whether it's a new song or a recreation, I don't want my work to fizzle out after the promotional cycle."

His work on *Ami Je Tomar 3.0* is a continuation of this love of creating songs that endure. It's a track that appeals to both young audiences and those who grew up with the original. His versatility is on full display in *Ami Je Tomar 3.0*, where he infused darker, deeper tones into the raags, aligning them with the horror elements of *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*. "The melody needed to carry the emotional weight of the film," he explains. This darker interpretation was not without its challenges, but director Anees Bazmee understood the vision and allowed him the creative freedom to experiment. He worked tirelessly with live instruments—tabla, dholak and strings—to give the track a warmth and authenticity that stands apart in an age of digital and AI-driven music production. "Eighty percent of what you hear is real

musicianship," he proudly notes. And this will to live, organic sound is something Amaal is eager to continue in his future work. "I'm working on an EP, something fresh and independent, the first of its kind for me," he teases, hinting at more surprises in store for his fans. In the meantime, *Ami Je Tomar 3.0* is already making waves, with Shreya Ghoshal and Sonu Nigam's renditions adding a new layer of charm to the track. "The reaction has been amazing," Amaal says, pleased with the positive feedback from both the audience and critics.

For him, the journey of crafting songs like *Ami Je Tomar 3.0* is as much about introspection as it is about artistic growth. As he approaches his tenth year in the industry, his focus remains on creating music that feels genuine and authentic. "I want my songs to stand the test of time," he says, noting that his music has become more mature over the years. "The melodies now have a different depth. They reflect where I am in life and in my music."

In a world where the pressure to meet audience expectations is ever-present, he stays grounded in his creative principles. "I focus on the essentials—good melody, meaningful lyrics and a sound that's relevant to the times," he says. This approach, he believes, ensures that his work resonates with listeners across generations. As he continues to push boundaries and redefine what it means to be a composer in Bollywood, one thing is clear: Amaal Malik is here to stay.



ANTIBIOTICS' DARK SECRET!

While antibiotics are essential for treating infections, emerging research suggests they may have an unexpected side effect: mood changes, including depression. As highlighted by *The Pioneer* this week, speaking to the experts, we understand the link between antibiotics and depression in this health column this week

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When we take antibiotics to treat infections, we generally focus on the benefits—clearing up bacteria and helping us recover. However, a growing body of research and firsthand experiences from patients suggest that these powerful medications might also have a hidden side effect: they could contribute to mood changes, including depression.

Take, for example, a patient recovering from a routine dental procedure who is prescribed antibiotics like clindamycin to prevent infection. While the procedure itself was straightforward, a few days into the antibiotic treatment, the individual begins to notice feelings of sadness, anxiety, and a sense of detachment—emotions that are out of character for them. Initially, they chalk it up to the stress of recovery, but as the symptoms persist, they start to wonder whether the antibiotics might be to blame.

Dr. Rahul Rai Kakkar, Consultant Psychiatrist & Psychotherapist, Narayana Hospital, highlights, "Antibiotics, though critical for treating bacterial infections, have been linked to potential side effects on mental health, including depression. This connection is often surprising to patients, who may not realise that their gut and brain are intricately connected through what's called the gut-brain axis. The gut hosts trillions of bacteria, which not only aid digestion but also play a role in regulating mood and cognitive functions."

Certain medications have been connected to depression, points out Dr. Sushma Dharavath, mental health expert and psychiatrist.

According to research, she explains to us, "Taking one course of antibiotics from the penicillin group is linked to a 23% increased chance of developing depression. The risk increases by 40% after two sessions of penicillin and by 56% after five or more courses. The connection comes from the fact that altering gut flora has been linked to sadness."

Antibiotics, while eliminating harmful bacteria, also disrupt the balance of these beneficial bacteria in the gut microbiome, leading to what we call dysbiosis. Dysbiosis can impair the production of neurotransmitters like serotonin, dopamine, and GABA—chemicals that help regulate mood, sleep and stress responses. Low levels of these neurotransmitters are associated with an increased risk of mood disorders, including depression.

Meanwhile, Dr. Irfan KJ, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, SPARSH Hospital, highlights, "It is often observed that there is a complex interplay between our immune system, gut health, and mental well-being. While antibiotics are vital in fighting infections and bacterial diseases, their impact on the nervous system can be multifaceted. Antibiotics can alter the gut microbiome, which plays a critical role in regulating mood and cognitive functions through the gut-brain axis. One of the most concerning effects of antibiotics is their potential to contribute to depressive symptoms. The gut microbiome produces various neurotransmitters, including serotonin, which significantly affects mood regulation."

When antibiotics disrupt the balance of beneficial bacteria in the gut, this can lead to reduced production of these essential neurotransmitters. Consequently, the altered gut flora may contribute to feelings of depression or anxiety in some patients.

However, according to Dr. Kakkar, not all antibiotics affect mental health to the same extent. Broad-spectrum antibiotics, such as fluoroquinolones (like ciprofloxacin) and macrolides (such as azithromycin), are particularly impactful because they target a wide range of bacteria, including both harmful and beneficial

types. With broad-spectrum antibiotics, the degree of microbial disruption in the gut is more pronounced, which can lead to more significant changes in mood and cognitive health. There is also evidence that long-term or frequent antibiotic use can lead to cumulative effects on the microbiome. This means that repeated courses of antibiotics over time could potentially increase the risk of depressive symptoms.

The side effects of antibiotics themselves—such as fatigue, gastrointestinal discomfort and general malaise—can also mimic or exacerbate depressive symptoms. "It's essential to recognize that the psychological effects of taking antibiotics may not only stem from the chemical changes in the body but also from the illness being treated and the treatment's physical toll. Patients often report feeling low or unwell during recovery from infections, leading to a temporary dip in mood," shares Dr. Irfan.

However, it's important to remember that the risk of depression and other mental health effects varies widely from person to person and depends on factors like age, lifestyle, pre-existing mental health conditions, and individual microbiome composition. For patients who must take antibiotics, there are ways to mitigate these risks. Probiotics and fermented foods can help replenish healthy bacteria during and after antibiotic treatment, potentially reducing the mental health impact. Patients must talk with their doctor or pharmacist about using probiotics alongside antibiotic therapy. If you experience mood changes or depressive symptoms during or after antibiotic treatment, don't hesitate to speak to your doctor. Sometimes, small adjustments in diet, lifestyle, and probiotic support can make a significant difference.

The importance of monitoring mood changes in patients undergoing antibiotic treatment should be more emphasised. Collaborative care involving primary care providers, psychiatrists, and nutritionists is crucial in managing these potential side effects effectively. Moreover, while antibiotics serve as a powerful tool against bacterial infections, we must remain vigilant about their broader implications, particularly concerning mental health. A holistic approach that considers both physical and psychological well-being is vital for optimal patient outcomes.

Should you avoid using antibiotics if you have depression?

Dr. Sushma, enunciating on the above, says, "It's best to discuss these concerns with a healthcare provider if you have a family history of depression, have experienced depression in the past, are currently experiencing depression or its symptoms, or are concerned about the risks of antibiotics because of a family history of depression (especially before you begin taking antibiotics). Telling a healthcare professional about your concern is an important safety measure for safeguarding your mental health while treating your physical health, even though it is likely that the consequences of not treating an infection will be worse than those of the treatment itself if your risk of depression is high."



BUILDING ON LEGACY WITH AMBITION

Forty-two-year-old **Member of Rajya Sabha from Telangana M Anil Kumar Yadav**, son of veteran Congress leader Anjan Kumar Yadav, brings a unique blend of traditional values and modern vision to his role. In a conversation with **Naveena Ghanate** of *The Pioneer*, Anil shares that his journey has been anything but feather-bedded. With an academic background that spans law and commerce, he has passion for sports and an unswerving commitment to strengthening the Congress unit in Hyderabad



HUMBLE BEGINNINGS IN HYDERABAD

I grew up in the Old City of Hyderabad. People may assume that I was born with a silver spoon. Far from that, when I was born, my father, Anjan Kumar Yadav, had just started his political journey with the Congress party. We did not have a background in politics; my father was the first in our family to step into this field. Before he took that path, we were a family deeply rooted in traditional values, while engaged in dairy farming. I am the eldest one among four siblings; I have two sisters and a brother. My childhood was about hard work, dreams, and values—not the luxury or fame that people might imagine. Academics were never my strong suit; I was drawn more to sports and physical challenges, which I think came naturally to me because of phelwaans in the family.

CONTESTING AGAINST STATE BJP CHIEF

My first major contest was against the then-state president of the BJP Dr K Laxman in Musheerabad. When I contested, the situation was bad and the party was in not a good shape then. Despite putting in my best efforts, I did not secure a victory. I always thought my contest was with the BJP Telangana chief, but BRS won surprisingly. I lost to TRS but was ahead of BJP but I did give very good fight. Because of voting pattern, I lost. That defeat taught me resilience and reinforced my belief that setbacks are part of a larger journey. Each challenge brings new lessons and perspectives, making me more committed to my goals. My father's tag will be there till my last breath and there is nothing to shy away. He is an established leader but why compare me with him. In my political journey, I have experienced both triumphs and setbacks. I have many police cases against me for doing political dharnas, protests among others.

PURSUING EDUCATION BEYOND TRADITION

I attended Ivy League Academy, a boarding school in Shamirpet, starting from the first grade. This experience taught me independence early on. Though I was not a top student, I always leaned towards sports and extracurricular activities, finding joy and purpose in the physical challenges they presented. After school, I pursued Intermediate in St. Mary's, obtained a Bachelor's degree in Commerce and later a law degree from Osmania University. I went for law because when I was young people used to think that I don't study and hardly did anything, seeing my deep involvement in extracurricular activities. I took it more as a personal challenge to prove that I could excel academically if I focused. I completed and enrolled as advocate also. It was not about following a particular career path but more about pushing my boundaries.



ACADEMICS AND EARLY FASCINATION WITH SPORTS

Phelwaans have been a part of our family tradition. We have our own Akhaada where a lot of youngsters join and train. At a young age, I too got attracted to it. I was a medalist at the university level and even represented at nationals. Early mornings became a ritual of practice, training, and workouts, which instilled a sense of discipline that has stayed with me. From a young age, I have had immense fascination for wrestling and strength sports. Wrestling is almost part of our family's DNA, both maternal and paternal. So, I often dreamed of becoming a heavyweight champion myself. I also fought in heavyweights and I feel my career is satisfactory. Now I practice on and off and not regularly. My time in sports deeply shaped my character and taught me the value of resilience.

FAMILY LIFE AND SUPPORT SYSTEM

On the personal front, I am married to Sunayana and ours was an arranged marriage. We have two wonderful children - Aarav and Anshul. Aarav is in 7th and other one is in 4th standard. I am not a very strict father. As a father, I strive to be present in their lives. Due to the discussions at home, they know a bit about wrestling. I am encouraging them in their pursuits. My wife's support in my career allows me to focus fully on the demands of public life, knowing my family is well cared for.



A NEW ROLE AS RAJYA SABHA MEMBER

My father wanted to be at a state level leader, while I was aspiring for MP position. PCC president Revanth Reddy told that he will give two tickets to our family one in the Assembly and one at Parliament and asked us to decide which to take up. We have been loyal to the party always. Father contested and lost and I was supposed to contest from the Secunderabad Lok Sabha seat. I was preparing for the Lok Sabha. Leadership was in discussion to promote a youngster to Rajya Sabha and thought about me. So, I have been entrusted with a significant role as a Rajya Sabha member. It was a very long battle of 10 years working and somewhere I think, there was a need to get a political break. Stepping into Parliament and sitting alongside leaders like Sonia Gandhi Madam and Khargeji is an honour and a responsibility I carry with humility. For me, this position is not just a title; it is a call to serve, especially as I focus on strengthening Congress within Hyderabad. The city has complex political dynamics, and I am committed to making an impact where it is needed most.



ENTERING POLITICS AND LEARNING RESILIENCE

My entry into politics was far from straightforward. I began my journey with the National Students Union of India, serving as a state general secretary, and later, I took on roles such as national coordinator and in-charge for the NSUI unit in Maharashtra. I was vice president of Andhra Pradesh Youth Congress. Then after Telangana was formed, I was elected as first Telangana Youth Congress president. My father was my guide through this journey, always reminding me, "I am there, at the end of the day you have my tag. But I can take you to some extent and I can introduce you to people, but it is your abilities that will ultimately carry you forward". Because he had started all by himself, he believed in my capacity to stand on my own, emphasising a philosophy of self-reliance over leaning on our family's name. His approach shaped how I viewed politics and my responsibility within it.



FROM NOWHERE TO SOMEWHERE

When I sit back and think about things, from nowhere to somewhere I came. No one believed that I would make it here. I was a naughty person as a youngster, fun-loving person following live and let live. No one knew I was focused and had a vision for self. Today if I look back, it has been a big journey. Through the challenges, I have lost many close associates, seen my tough times and happy times. I have close friends who have stood by me in both the highs and lows. I have travelled a long way from the mischievous, carefree kid I once was, evolving into a focused individual with big dreams. I am a teetotaler. People often mistake me for my brother. Even in the case related to raids at a birthday party, it was my younger brother who was there. Unfortunately, the Opposition always tries to twist and my name comes up. Each chapter—every defeat and every victory—has contributed to the journey that has brought me here. While I still have many dreams left to realise, I know I am on the path I am meant to walk.

QUICK BYTES

Favorite colour: White
Favorite movie: I'm waiting for my own movie to be released! (chuckles)
Favorite actor: Akshay Kumar and Salmaan Khan
Song you listen to often: Many Bollywood songs
Favorite politician: Other than my father, it is Rahul Gandhi
Favorite food: Biryani
Hobbies: Playing sports, working out at gym, listening to music, spending time with friends
Favorite sportsperson: Sachin Tendulkar, Virat Kohli, Dhoni. I'm a huge cricket fan and I play all sports
Happy moment: When my dad won elections for the first time
Sad moment: Losing elections as we had put all our energy and resources into the fight

DABBLED IN ACTING, MADE FILM

At the age of 25, I decided to try my hand at acting as a challenge. I come from a basti in the Old City; I did not have a background in film. But I thought why not give it a shot? I saw my dad trying out politics without background; so, I thought I should pursue acting and prove. It was a way to step out of my comfort zone and prove to myself that I could succeed in a completely different field. Although I completed a film *Yuva Andhra Student* on college elections and youngsters, it has not been released yet. People often ask me about it, wondering why it is still on hold. Honestly, the film industry operates very differently, with its own set of politics and challenges. But I see my attempt in acting as a success in its own way, a personal accomplishment. Stepping onto that stage was something I never expected, and I look back at it proudly. Politics is not same as acting. As a politician you have to be real as it is real people involved.

PIVOTAL MOMENT AND LIFELONG PURPOSE

My father winning the first election was a game-changer for my life. I was in my degree first year then and I only seen him struggle. It came after a long wait. All his peers were established in good positions, having started at about the same age. That moment when we fought and won the election, it gave birth to my political system. Reflecting on my life, I consider my father's first electoral victory a pivotal moment. Watching him struggle and persevere for years shaped my own aspirations, paving the way for my journey in politics. His victory was not just a win; it was a testament to his resilience and a moment that defined my purpose in this field. It reminds me that in public service, it is not about where you start but the relentless drive to keep moving forward.

RAHUL GANDHI'S STYLE OF FUNCTIONING

I have always believed in Rahul Gandhi's style of functioning; he always says 'just keep doing what you are doing; elections will come and go'. We used to have a lot of interaction with him because of national executives and all this. He says often: 'You always stick to the ideology and keep working on it; work for identity, work for the party, strengthen it with whatever capability you can in whatever way you can. You try to just stay there, stay there; because we have seen a very tough time in the last 10 years'.

